



THE  
S L A V E :

OR

MEMOIRS OF ARCHY MOORE.

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ALL men are by nature equally free and independent, and have certain INHERENT RIGHTS, of which, when they enter into society, they cannot by any compact deprive or divest their posterity, viz: the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing happiness and safety. *Virginia Bill of Rights, Art. I.*

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# MEMOIRS.

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## CHAPTER I.

It seemed to be with great reluctance, that the poor girl carried back her recollection to that terrible day, which had separated us, as we then thought, forever. She hesitated,—and seemed half ashamed, and almost unwilling to speak of what had followed after that separation. I pitied her,—and great as was my curiosity, if my feelings on that occasion deserve so trifling a name, I could almost have wished her to pass over the interval in silence. Distressing doubts and dreadful apprehensions crowded upon me, and I almost dreaded to hear her speak. But she hid her face in my bosom, and murmuring in a voice half choked with sobs, “my husband must know it,”—she began her story.

She was already, she said, more than half dead with fright and horror, and the first blow that colonel Moore struck, beat her senseless to the ground. When she came to her senses, she found herself lying on a bed, in a room which she did not recollect ever to have seen before. She rose from the bed as well as her

bruises would allow her ;—for she did not move without difficulty. The room was prettily furnished ; the bed was hung with curtains, neat and comfortable ; a dressing table stood in one corner ; and there was all the usual furniture of a lady's bed-chamber,—but it was not like any room in the house at Spring-Meadow.

She tried to open the doors of which there were two,—but both were fastened. She endeavored to get a peep from the windows, in the hope that she might know some part of the prospect. But she could only discover that the house seemed to be surrounded by trees ; for the windows were guarded on the outside by close blinds, which were fastened in some way she did not understand, so that she could not open them. This fastening of the doors and windows, satisfied her that she was held a prisoner, and confirmed all her worst suspicions.

As she passed by the dressing table, she caught a look at the glass. Her face was deadly pale ;—her hair fell in loose disorder over her shoulders, and looking down, she saw stains of blood upon her dress, but whether her own or her husband's she could not tell. She sat down on the bed-side ; her head was dizzy and confused, and she scarcely knew whether she was awake or dreaming.

Presently one of the doors opened, and a woman entered. It was Miss Riity,\* as she was called among the servants at Spring-Meadow, a pretty, dark-complexioned damsel, who enjoyed at that time, the sta-

\* Henrietta.

tion and dignity of colonel Moore's favorite. Cassy's heart beat hard, while she heard some one fumbling at the lock. When the door opened she was glad to see that it was only a woman, and one whom she knew. She ran towards her, caught her by the hand, and begged her protection. The girl laughed, and asked what she was afraid of. Cassy hardly knew what answer to make. After hesitating a moment, she begged Miss Ritty to tell her where she was, and what they intended to do with her.

"It is a fine place you're in," was the answer, "and when master comes, you can ask him what is to be done with you." This was said with a significant titter, which Cassy knew too well how to interpret.

Though Miss Ritty had evaded a direct answer to her inquiry, it now occurred to her where she must be. This woman, she recollected, occupied a small house,—the same that once had been inhabited by Cassy's mother and by mine,—at a considerable distance from any other on the plantation. It was surrounded by a little grove which almost hid it from view, and was very seldom visited by any of the servants. Miss Ritty looked upon herself, and was in fact regarded by the rest of us, as a person of no little consequence; and though she sometimes condescended to make visits, she was not often anxious to have them returned. Cassy, however, had been once at her house. There were two little rooms in front, into which she was freely admitted; but the room behind was locked, and it was whispered among the servants, that colonel Moore kept the key, so that even Miss Ritty herself

did not enter it except in his company. This perhaps was scandal ; but Cassy recollected to have noticed that the windows of this room were protected against impertinent curiosity, by close blinds on the outside ; and she no longer doubted where she was.

She told Miss Ritty as much, and inquired, if her mistress knew of her return.

Miss Ritty could not tell.

She asked if her mistress had got another maid in her place.

Miss Ritty did not know.

She begged for permission to go and see her mistress ; but that, Miss Ritty said, was impossible.

She requested that her mistress might be told where she was ; and that she wished very much to see her. Miss Ritty said that she would be glad to oblige her, but she was not much in the habit of going to the House, and the last time she was there, Mrs Moore had spoken to her so spitefully, that she was determined never to go again, unless she were absolutely obliged to.

Having thus exhausted every resource, poor Cassy threw herself upon the bed, hid her face in the bed-clothes, and sought relief in tears.

It was now Miss Ritty's turn. She patted the poor girl on the shoulder, bade her not be down-hearted, and unlocking a bureau which stood in the room, she took out a dress which she pronounced to be mighty handsome. She bade Cassy get up and put it on, for her master would be coming presently. This was what Cassy feared ; but she hoped, if she could not

escape the visit, at least to defer it. So she told Miss Ritty that she was too sick to see any body ; she absolutely refused to look at her dresses, and begged to be allowed to die in peace. Miss Ritty laughed when she spoke of dying ; yet she seemed a little alarmed at the idea of it, and inquired what was the matter.

Cassy told her that she had seen and suffered enough that day, to kill any body ; that her head was sick and her heart was broken, and the sooner death came to her relief the better. She then mustered courage to mention my name, and endeavored to discover what had become of me. Miss Ritty again shook her head and declared that she could give no information.

At this moment the door opened, and colonel Moore came in. He had a haggard and guilty look. The flush which overspread his face, when she had last seen him, was wholly gone ; his countenance was pale and ghastly. She had never seen him look so before, and she trembled at the sight of him. He bade Ritty begone ; but told her to wait in the front room as perhaps he might need her assistance. He bolted the door, and sat down on the bed by Cassy's side. She started up in terror, and retired to the farthest corner of the room. He smiled scornfully, and bade her come back and sit down beside him. She obeyed ;—for however reluctant, she could do no better. He took her hand, and threw one arm about her waist. Again she shrank from him and would have fled ; but he stamped his foot impatiently, and in a harsh tone, bade her be quiet.

For a moment he was silent ;—then changing his manner, he summoned up his habitual smile, and began in that mild, gentle, insinuating tone, in which he was quite unsurpassed. He plied her with flattery, soft words and generous promises. He reproached her, but without any harshness, for her attempts to evade the kindness he intended her. He then spoke of me ; but no sooner had he entered on that subject than his voice rose, his face became flushed again, and he seemed in manifest danger of losing his temper.

She interrupted him, and besought him to tell her how I did and what had become of me. He answered that I was well enough ; much better than I deserved to be ; but she need give herself no further thought or trouble on that score, for he intended to send me out of the country as soon as I was able to travel, and she need not hope nor expect ever to see me again.

She throw herself at his feet and begged that she might be sent off and sold with me. He affected to be greatly surprised at this request, and inquired why she made it. She told him, that after all that had happened, it were better that she should not live any longer in his family ;—beside, if she were sold at the same time, the same person might buy her that bought her husband. That word, husband, put him into a violent passion. He told her that she had no husband, and wanted none ; for he would be better than a husband to her. He said that he was tired of her folly, and with a significant look, he bade her not be a fool, but to leave off whining and crying, be a good girl, and



do as her master desired ; was it not a servant's duty to obey her master ?

She told him that she was sick and wretched, and begged him to leave her. Instead of doing so, he threw his arms about her neck, and declared that her being sick was all imagination, for he had never seen her look half so handsome.

She started up ;—but he caught her in his arms, and dragged her towards the bed. Even at that terrible moment her presence of mind did not forsake her. She exerted all her strength, and succeeded in break-away from his hateful embraces. Then summoning up all her energies, she looked him in the face, as well as her tears would allow her, and striving to command her voice, “ Master,—Father,” she cried, “ what is it you would have of your own daughter ?”

Colonel Moore staggered as if a bullet had struck him. A burning blush overspread his face ; he would have spoken, but the words seemed to stick in his throat. This confusion was only for a moment. In an instant he recovered his self-possession, and without taking any notice of her last appeal, he merely said, that if she was really sick, he did not wish to trouble her. With these words he unbolted the door, and walked out of the room.

She heard him talking with Miss Ritty ; and he had been gone but a few moments, before she entered. She began with a long string of questions about what colonel Moore had said and done ; but when Cassy did not seem inclined to give her any answer, she laughed, and thanked her, and told her she need not

trouble herself, for she had been peeping and listening at the key-hole, the whole time. She said, she could not imagine, why Cassy made such a fuss. In a very young girl it might be excusable ; but in one as old as she was, and a married woman too, she could not understand it. Such is the morality, and such the modesty to be expected in a slave !

The poor girl was in no humor for controversy ; so she listened to this ribaldry without making any answer to it. Yet even at this moment, a faint ray of hope began to display itself. It occurred to her, that if Miss Ritty could be made sensible of the risk she ran in aiding to create herself a rival, she would not be pleased at the prospect of being perhaps supplanted in a situation, which she seemed to find so very agreeable. This idea appeared to offer some chance of gaining over Miss Ritty to aid her in escaping from Spring-Meadow ; and at once, she resolved to act upon it. It was necessary to be cautious and to feel her way, lest by piqueing the girl's pride, she might deprive herself of all the advantage to be gained from working upon her fears.

She approached the subject gradually, and soon placed it in a light, in which, it was plain, her companion had never viewed it. When it was first suggested to her, she expressed a deal of confidence in her own beauty, and affected to have no fears ;—yet it soon became obvious, that notwithstanding all her boasting, she was a good deal alarmed. Indeed it was quite impossible for her, to look her anticipated rival in the face, and not to be so. Cassy was well pleased to see

the effect of her suggestions ; and began to entertain some serious hopes of once more making her escape.

It was, to be sure, a miserable, and most probably an ineffectual resource, this running away. But what else could she do ? What other hope was there of escaping a fate which all her womanly and all her religious feelings taught her to regard with the utmost horror and detestation ? This was her only chance ; she would try it, and trust in God's aid to give her endeavors a happy issue.

She now told Ritty distinctly, how she felt, what she intended, and what assistance she wanted. Her new confederate applauded her resolution. "Certainly, if colonel Moore was really her father, that did make a difference ; and her being a methodist might help to account for her feelings, for she knew that sort of folks were mighty strict in all their notions."

But though Miss Ritty was ready enough to encourage and applaud, she seemed very reluctant to take any active part in aiding and abetting an escape, which though apparently it tended to promote her interests, might end, if her agency in it were discovered, in bringing her into danger and disgrace.

Several plans were talked over, but Miss Ritty had some objection to all of them. She preferred any thing to the risk of being suspected by her master, of plotting to defeat his wishes. As they found great difficulty in fixing upon any feasible plan, it was agreed at last, in order to gain time, to give out that Cassy was extremely sick. This indeed was hardly a fiction ;—for nothing but the very critical nature of her situa-

tion had enabled the poor girl to sustain herself against the shocks and miseries of the last four and twenty hours. Ritty undertook to persuade her master, that the best thing he could do, was to let her alone till she got better. She would promise to take her into training in the mean time, and was to assure colonel Moore, that she did not doubt of being soon able to convince her, that it was both her interest and her duty, to comply with her master's wishes.

So far things went extremely well. They had hardly arranged their plan, before they heard colonel Moore's step in the outer room. Ritty ran to him, and succeeded in persuading him to go away without any attempt to see Cassy. He commended her zeal, and promised to be governed by her advice. The next day a circumstance happened which neither Cassy nor Ritty had anticipated, but which proved very favorable to their design. Colonel Moore was obliged to set off for Baltimore, without delay. Some pressing call of business, made his immediate departure indispensable. Before setting out, however, he found time to visit Miss Ritty, and to enjoin upon her to keep a watchful eye upon Cassy, and to take care and bring her to her senses, before his return.

If Cassy was to escape at all, now was her time. She soon hit upon a scheme. Her object was, to screen Ritty from suspicion as much as to favor her own flight. Luckily the same arrangement might be made to accomplish both purposes. Cassy could only escape through the door or out of the windows. Escaping through the door was out of the question, be-

cause Ritty had the key of it, and was supposed to be sleeping or watching, or both together, in the front room. The escape then must be by the windows. These did not lift up as is commonly the case, but opened upon hinges on the inside. The blinds by which they were guarded on the outside were slats nailed across the window-frames and not intended to be opened. These must be cut or broken, and as they were of pine, this was a task of no great difficulty. Ritty brought a couple of table knives, and assisted in cutting them away,—though according to the story she was to tell her master, she was sleeping all the time, most soundly and unsuspectingly, and Cassy must have secretly cut away the slats with a pocket-knife.

Early in the evening of colonel Moore's departure, every thing was ready, and Cassy was to sally forth as soon as she dared to venture. Ritty agreed not to give any notice of her escape till late the next day. This delay she could account for by the plea of not being able to find the overseer, and by a pretended uncertainty as to whether it would be colonel Moore's wish, that the overseer should be informed at all about the matter. At all events, they hoped that no very vigorous pursuit would be made until colonel Moore's return.

Cassy now made ready for her departure. She felt a pang at the idea of leaving me ;—but as Ritty could not or would not tell her what had become of me, and as she knew, that separated and helpless as we were, it was impossible for us to render each other any assistance, she rightly judged, that she would best serve me,

and best comply with my wishes, by adopting the only plan, that seemed to carry with it any likelihood of preserving herself from the violence she dreaded.

Cassy had supplied herself from Ritty's allowance, with food enough to last for several days. It was now quite dark, and time for her to go. She kissed her hostess and confederate, who seemed much affected at dismissing her on so lonely and hopeless an adventure, and who freely gave her what little money she had. Cassy was a good deal touched at this unexpected generosity. She let herself down from the window, bade Ritty farewell, and summoning up all her resolution and self-command, she took the nearest way across the fields, towards the high-road. This road was little traveled except by the people of Spring-Meadow and one or two other neighboring plantations, and at this hour of the evening, there was little danger of meeting any body, except perhaps a night-walking slave, who would be as anxious as herself to avoid being seen. There was no moon,—but the glimmer of the starlight served to guide her steps. She felt no apprehension of losing her way, for she had frequently been in the carriage with her mistress, as far as the little village at the court-house of the county; and it was hither, that in the first instance, she determined to go.

She arrived there, without having met a single soul. As yet there were no signs of morning. All was still, save the monotonous chirpings of the summer insects, interrupted now and then by the crowing of a cock or the barking of a watch-dog. The village consisted of a dilapidated court-house, a black-smith's shop, a tav-

ern, two or three stores, and half a dozen scattered houses. It was situated at the meeting of two roads. One of these she knew, led into the road that ran towards Baltimore. She had flattered herself with the idea of reaching that city, where she had many acquaintances, and where she hoped she might find protection and employment. Her chance of ever getting there was very small. Baltimore was some two or three hundred miles distant; and she did not even know which of the roads that met at the court-house she ought to take. She could not inquire the way, beg a cup of cold water, or even be seen upon the road, without the greatest danger of being taken up as a run-away, and carried back to the master from whom she was flying.

After hesitating for some time, she took one of the roads that offered themselves to her choice, and walked on with vigor. The excitement of the last day or two seemed to give her an unnatural strength, for after a walk of some twenty miles, she felt fresher than at first. But the light of the morning dawn, which began to show itself, reminded her that it was no longer safe to pursue her journey. Close by the road side was a friendly thicket, the shrubs and weeds all dripping with the dew. She had gone but a little way among them, when she found them so high and close as to furnish a sufficient hiding-place. She knelt down, and destitute as she was of human assistance, she besought the aid and guardian care of Heaven. After eating a scanty meal,—for it was necessary to husband her provisions,—she scraped the leaves together into a rude bed, and

composed herself to sleep. The three preceding nights she had scarcely slept at all,—but she made it up now, for she did not wake till late in the afternoon.

As soon as evening closed in, she started again, and walked as vigorously as before. The road forked frequently ; and she had no means of determining which of the various courses she ought to follow. She took one or the other, as her judgment, or rather as her fancy decided ; and she comforted herself with the notion, that whether right or wrong in her selections, at all events, she was getting further from Spring-Meadow.

In the course of the night she met several travellers. Some of them passed without seeming to notice her. She discovered some at a distance and concealed herself in the bushes till they had passed. But she did not always escape so easily. More than once, she was stopped and questioned,—but luckily she succeeded in giving satisfactory answers. Indeed there was nothing in her complexion, especially in the uncertain light of the evening, that would clearly indicate her to be a slave ; and in answering the questions that were put to her, she took care to say nothing that would betray her condition. One of the men who questioned her, shook his head, and did not seem satisfied ; another, sat on his horse and watched her till she was fairly out of sight ; a third told her, that she was a very suspicious character ;—but all three suffered her to pass. She was the less liable to interruption, because in Virginia, the houses of the inhabitants are not generally situated along the public roads. The



planters usually prefer to build at some distance from the high way,—and the roads, passing along the highest and most barren tracts, wind their weary length through a desolate, and what seems almost an uninhabited country. When morning approached again, she concealed herself as before, and waited for the return of night to pursue her journey.

She proceeded in this way for four days, or rather nights, at the end of which time her provisions were entirely exhausted. She had wandered she knew not whither,—and the hope of reaching Baltimore, which at first had lightened her fatigue, was now quite gone. She knew not what to do. To go much further without assistance was scarcely possible. Yet should she ask any where for food or guidance, though she stood some chance perhaps of passing for a free white woman, still her complexion, and the circumstance of her travelling alone, might cause her to be suspected as a run-away, and very probably, she would be stopped, put into some jail, and detained there, till suspicion was changed into certainty.

She was traveling slowly along, the fifth night, exhausted with hunger and fatigue, and reflecting upon her unhappy situation, when descending a hill, the road came suddenly upon the banks of a broad river. There was no bridge; but a ferry boat was fastened to the shore, and close by was the ferry house, which seemed also to be a tavern. Here was a new perplexity. She could not cross the river without calling up the ferry people or waiting till they made their appearance, and this would be exposing herself at once

to that risk of detection which she had resolved to defer to the very last moment. Yet to turn back and seek another road seemed to be an expedient equally desperate. Any other road, which did not lead in a direction opposite to that which she wished to follow, would be likely to bring her again upon the banks of the same river ; and as she could not live without food, she would be soon compelled to apply somewhere for assistance, and to face the detection she was so anxious to avoid.

She sat down by the road side, resolved to wait for the morning and to take her chance. There was a field of corn near the house, and the stalks were covered with roasting ears. She had no fire, nor the means of kindling one, but the sweet milky taste of the unripe kernels served to satisfy the cravings of hunger.

She had chosen a place where she could observe the first movements about the ferry house. The morning had but just dawned, when she saw a man open the door and come out of it. He was black, and she walked boldly up to him, and told him that she was in great haste and wished to be taken across the ferry immediately. The fellow seemed rather surprised at seeing a woman, a traveler, alone, and at that hour of the morning ;—but after staring at her a minute or two, he appeared to recollect that here was an opportunity of turning an honest penny, and muttering something about the earliness of the hour, and the ferry boat not starting till after sunrise, he offered to take her across in a canoe, for half a dollar. This price she did not hesitate to pay ; and the fellow no doubt,

put it into his own pocket, without ever recollecting to hand it over to his master, or to mention a word to him about this early passenger.

They entered the boat, and he paddled her across. She did not dare to ask any questions, lest she should betray herself, and she did her best to quiet the curiosity of the boatman, who however, was very civil and easily satisfied. Having landed on the opposite shore, she traveled on a mile or two further. By this time it was broad day-light and she concealed herself as usual.

At night, she set out again. But she was faint with hunger, her shoes were almost worn out, her feet were swollen and very painful, and altogether, her situation was any thing but comfortable. She seemed to have got off the high-way, and to be traveling some cross-road, which wound along through dreary and deserted fields, and appeared to be very little frequented. All that night, she did not meet a single person or pass a single house. Painful as was the effort, she still struggled to drag along her weary steps; but her spirits were broken, her heart was sinking, and her strength was almost gone. At length the morning dawned; but the wretched Cassy did not seek her customary hiding-place. She still kept on in hopes of reaching some house. She was now quite subdued; and chose to risk her liberty, and even to hazard being carried back to Spring-Meadow and subjected to the fearful fate from which she was flying, rather than perish with hunger and fatigue. Sad indeed it is, that the noblest resolution and the loftiest stubbornness of soul is com-

pelled so often to yield to the base necessities of animal nature, and from a paltry and irrational fear of death,—of which tyrants have ever known so well to take advantage,—to sink down from the lofty height of heroic virtue, to the dastard submissiveness of a craven and obedient slave !

She had not gone far before she saw a low mean looking house by the road side. It was a small building of logs, blackened with age, and not a little dilapidated. Half the panes or more, were wanting in the two or three little windows with which it was provided, and their places were supplied by old hats, old coats, and pieces of plank. The door seemed dropping from its hinges ; and there was no enclosure of any kind about the house, unless that name might properly be given to the tall weeds with which it was surrounded. Altogether, it showed most manifest signs of thriftless and comfortless indolence.

She knocked softly at the door, and a female voice, but a rough and harsh one, bade her come in. There was no hall or entry ; the out-door opened directly into the only room ; and on entering, she found it occupied by a middle aged woman, barefooted, and in a slovenly dress, with her uncombed hair hanging about a haggard and sun-burnt face. She was setting a treakety table, and seemed to be making preparations for breakfast. The house had but one room, of which one side was almost wholly taken up by an enormous fire place. A fire was burning in it, and the corn cakes were baking in the ashes. In the opposite corner was a low bed, on which a man, the master of the

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and talked it over. Nothing appeared to deter them from accepting her proposal, at once, but the fear of being detected in harboring and detaining a run-away. Cassy did her best to quiet these apprehensions ; and after a short struggle, avarice and the dear delight of power triumphed over their fears, and Cassy became the property of Mr Proctor ; for so the man was named. His property, as he might speciously argue, by her own consent,—a ten times better title, than the vast majority of his countrymen could boast.

To prevent suspicions among the neighbors, it was agreed that Cassy should pass for a free woman, whom Mr Proctor had hired ; and as this gentleman had been so fortunate as to have been initiated into the art and mystery of penmanship, an accomplishment somewhat rare among the ' poor white folks' of Virginia, in order that Cassy might be prepared to answer impertinent questions, he gave her free-papers, which he forged for the occasion.

It was a great thing to have escaped returning to Spring-Meadow. But for all that, Cassy discovered, that her present situation would not prove very agreeable. Mr Proctor was the descendant and representative of what, at no distant period, had been a rich and very respectable family. The frequent division of a large estate, which nobody took any pains to increase, while all diminished it by idleness, dissipation and bad management, had left Mr Proctor's father in possession of a few slaves and a considerable tract of worn-out land. At his death, the slaves had been sold to pay his debts, and the land, being divided

among his numerous children, had made Mr Proctor the possessor of a few barren acres. But though left with this miserable pittance, he had been brought up, in the dissipated and indolent habits of a Virginian gentleman ; the land he owned, which was so poor and worthless that none of his numerous creditors thought it worth their while to disturb him in the possession of it, still entitled him to the dignity of a freeholder and a voter ; and he felt himself as much above, what is esteemed in that country, the base and degraded condition of a laborer, as the richest aristocrat in the whole state. He was as proud, as lazy, and as dissipated as any of the nabobs, his neighbors ; and devoted the principal part of his time to gambling, politics and drink.

Luckily for Mr Proctor, his wife was a very notable woman. She boasted no patrician blood ; and when her husband began to talk, as he often did, about the antiquity and respectability of his family, she would cut him short by observing, that she thought herself full as good as he was,—but for all that, her ancestors had been ‘poor folks’ as far back as any body knew any thing about them. If the question between aristocracy and democracy were to be settled by the experience of the Proctors, the plebeians, most undoubtedly, would carry the day ; for while her husband did little or nothing but frolic, drink and ride about the country, Mrs Proctor plowed, planted and gathered in the crop. But for her energy and industry, it is much to be feared that Mr Proctor’s aristocratic habits would

have soon made himself and his family a burden upon the county.

Cassy's services were a great accession to this establishment. Her new mistress seemed resolved to make the most of them, and the poor girl before long, was almost completely broken down, by a degree and a kind of labor to which she was totally unaccustomed. Two or three times a week, at least, Mr Proctor came home drunk ; and on these occasions, he blustered about, threatened his wife, and beat and abused his children without any sort of mercy. Cassy could hardly expect to come off better than they did ;—indeed his drunken abuse would have become quite intolerable, if the energetic Mrs Proctor had not known how to quell it. At first, she used mild measures, and coaxed and flattered him into quiet ; but when these means failed, she would tumble him into bed, by main strength, and compel him to lie still by the terror of the broom-stick.

It was nothing but the wholesome authority, which Mrs Proctor exercised over her husband, that protected Cassy against what she dreaded even more than Mr Proctor's drunken rudeness. Whenever he could find her alone, he tormented her with solicitations of a most distressing kind ; and nothing could rid her of his importunities, except the threat of complaining to Mrs Proctor. But her troubles did not end even here. Mrs Proctor listened to her complaints, thanked her for the information, and said she would speak to Mr Proctor about it. But she could not imagine that a slave could possibly be endowed with the slightest



particle of that virtue, of which the free women of Virginia boast the exclusive possession. Full of this notion, she judged it highly improbable, whatever merit Cassy might pretend to claim, that she had actually resisted the importunities and solicitations of so very seducing a fellow as Mr Proctor ; and filled with all the spite and fury of female jealousy, she delighted herself with torturing and tormenting the object of her suspicions. Mrs Proctor, with all her merit, had one little foible which, most likely she had adopted out of compliment to her husband. She thought a daily dram of whiskey necessary to keep off the fever and ague ; and when through inadvertance, as sometimes would happen, she doubled the dose, it seemed to give a new edge to the natural keenness of her temper. On these occasions, she plied both words and blows with a fearful energy ; and though perhaps it were difficult to say which of the two was most to be dreaded, both together they were enough to exhaust the patience of a saint.

Poor Cassy could discover no means of delivering herself from this complication of miseries, under which she was ready to sink, when she was most unexpectedly relieved, by the unsolicited interference of a couple of Mr Proctor's neighbors. They were men of leisure like him ; like him too, they were of good families, and one of them had received an excellent education, and was more or less distantly connected with several of the most distinguished people in the state. But a course of reckless dissipation had long ago stripped them of such property as they had inherited,

and reduced them to live by their wits ; which they exercised in a sort of partnership, principally on the race-course and at the gaming table.

These two speculating gentlemen were on terms of intimacy with Mr Proctor, and they knew that he had a free woman, for such they supposed Cassy to be, living at his house. In common with most Virginians, they considered the existence of a class of freed people as a great social annoyance, and likely enough in the end, seriously to endanger those ' sacred rights of property,' in defence of which there is nothing, which a true-born son of liberty ought not to be proud to undertake. Instigated doubtless, by such patriotic notions, these public-spirited persons judged that they would be rendering the state a service,—to say nothing of the money they might put into their own pockets,—by applying to this great political evil, so far at least as Cassy was a party to it, a remedy, which the doctrines of more than one of the Virginian statesmen, and the spirit of more than one of the Virginian statutes would seem fully to sanction. In plain English, they resolved to seize Cassy and sell her for a slave !

The business of kidnapping is one of the native fruits of the American system of slavery ; and is as common, and as well organized in many parts of the United States, as the business of horse-stealing is, in many other countries. When they take to stealing slaves, the business of these adventurers becomes very hazardous ; but while they confine themselves to stealing only free people, they can pursue their vo-

cation with comparatively little danger. They may perhaps inflict some trifling personal wrong ;—but according to the doctrines of some of the most popular among the American politicians, they are doing the public no inconsiderable service ; since, in their opinion, nothing seems to be wanting to render the slave-holding states of America a perfect paradise, except the extermination of the emancipated class. It was no doubt, by some such lofty notions of the public good, that Cassy's friends were actuated. At all events, those sophistries which tyranny has invented to justify oppression, are as much an apology for them as for any one else.

As far as Cassy could learn, their scheme was pretty much as follows. They invited Mr Proctor to a drinking frolic, and as soon as the whiskey had reduced him to a state of insensibility, a message was sent to his wife that her husband was taken dangerously ill, and that she must instantly come to his assistance. Notwithstanding a few domestic jars, Mr and Mrs Proctor were a most loving couple ; and the good woman, greatly alarmed at this unexpected news, immediately set out to visit her husband. The conspirators had followed their own messenger, and were concealed in a thicket close to the house watching for her departure. She was hardly out of sight, before they rushed into the field where Cassy was at work, bound her hand and foot, put her into a sort of covered wagon or carry-all which they had provided for the occasion, and drove off as fast as possible. They traveled all that day, and the following night. Early the next

morning, they reached a small village where they met a slave-trader with a gang of slaves, on his way to Richmond. The gentlemen-thieves soon struck up a bargain with the gentleman slave-trader ; and having received their money, they delivered Cassy into his possession.

He seemed touched with her beauty and her distress, and treated her with a kindness which she hardly expected from one of his profession. Her shoes and clothes were nearly worn out. He bought her new ones,—and as she was half dead with fatigue, terror and want of sleep, he even went so far as to wait a day at the village in order that she might recover a little before setting out, on the journey to Richmond.

But she soon found that she was expected to make a return for all these favors. When they stopped for the night, at the end of the first day's journey, she received an intimation that she was to share the bed of her master ; and directions were given to her how and when to come there. These directions she saw fit to disregard. In the morning her master called her to account. He laughed in her face, when she spoke of the wickedness of what he had commanded, and told her he did not want her to be preaching any of her sermons to him. He would excuse her disobedience this time ; but she must take very good care not to repeat it.

The next evening she received directions similar to those which had been given her the day before ; and again she disobeyed them. Her master, who had been drinking and gambling half the night, with some

boon companions whom he found at the tavern, enraged at not finding her in his room as he had expected sallied forth in pursuit of her. Luckily he was too drunk to know very well where he was going. He had gone but a few steps from the tavern door, before he stumbled over a pile of wood, and injured himself very seriously. His cries soon brought some of the tavern's people to his assistance. They carried him to his room, bound up his bruises, and put him to bed.

It was late the next morning before he was able to rise; but he was no sooner up than he resolved to take ample vengeance for his disappointment and his bruises. He came hobbling to the tavern door, with a crutch in one hand and a whip in the other. He had all his slaves paraded before the house, and made two of the stoutest fellows among them hold Cassy by the arms, while he plied the whip. Her cries soon collected the idlers and loungers, who seem to constitute the principal population of a Virginian village. Some inquired the cause of the whipping, but without seeming to think the question of consequence enough to wait for an answer. It seemed to be the general opinion that the master was tipsy, and had chosen this way to vent his drunken humors; but whether drunk or sober, nobody thought of interfering with his 'sacred and unquestionable rights.' On the contrary, all looked on with unconcern, if not with approbation; and the greater number seemed as much pleased with the sport, as so many boys would have been, with the baiting of an unlucky cat.

Just in the midst of this proceeding, a handsome

aveling carriage drove up to the door. There were two ladies in it, and they no sooner saw what was going on, than with that humanity, so natural to the female heart, that not even the horrid customs and detestable usages of slave-holding tyranny can totally extinguish it, they begged the brutal savage to leave beating the poor girl, and tell them what was the matter. The fellow reluctantly dropped the lash, and answered in a surly tone, that she was an insolent disobedient baggage, not fit to be noticed by two such ladies, and that he was only giving her a little wholesome correction. However, this did not seem to satisfy them; and in the mean time the carriage steps were let down and they got out. Poor Cassy was sobbing and crying and scarcely able to utter a word; her hair had fallen down over her face and shoulders; and her cheeks were all stained with tears. Yet even in this situation, the two ladies seemed struck with her appearance. They entered into conversation with her, and soon found that she had been bred a ladies' maid, and that her present master was a slave-trader. These ladies, it seemed, had been traveling at the north; and while on their journey, had lost a female servant by a sudden and violent attack of fever. They were now on their return to Carolina; and the younger of the two, suggested to her mother, for such their relation proved to be, to buy Cassy to supply the place of the maid they had lost. The mother started some objections to purchasing a stranger, about whom they knew nothing, and who had been sold by her former owner, they knew not for what reasons. But when Cassy's

tears and prayers and supplications, were added to the entreaties of her daughter, she found herself quite unable to resist ; and she sent to ask the man his price. He named it. It was a high one ;—but Mrs Montgomery, for that was the lady's name, was one of those people, who when they have made up their minds to do a generous action, are not easily to be shaken from their purpose. She took Cassy into the house with her, ordered the trunks to be brought in, and told the man to make out his bill of sale. The purchase was no sooner completed, than her new mistress took Cassy up stairs and soon fitted her with a dress better becoming her new situation, than did the coarse gown and heavy shoes for which she was indebted to the generosity of her late master.

Cassy was dressed, the bill of sale was delivered, and the money paid, when Mrs Montgomery's brother and traveling companion rode up. He rallied his sister not a little, on what he called her foolish propensity to interfere between other people and their servants ; he took her to task rather severely, for the imprudence of her purchase, and the high price she had paid ; and he told her with a smile and a shake of the head, that one time or other, her foolish confidence and generosity would be her ruin. Mrs Montgomery took her brother's raillery all in good part ; the carriage was ordered, and they proceeded together on their journey.

The ladies with whom Cassy had come to the meeting, were Mrs Montgomery and her daughter. They lived some ten miles from Carleton-Hall. So near had Cassy and myself been to each other for six long

months or more, without knowing it. Cassy spoke of her mistress with the greatest affection. Her gratitude was unbounded ; and she seemed to find a real pleasure and enjoyment in serving a benefactress who treated her with a gentle and uniform kindness, not often exerted even by those who are capable of momentary acts of the greatest generosity.

As Cassy finished her story, she threw her arms about my neck, leaned her head upon my bosom, and looking me in the face, while the tears were streaming from her eyes, she heaved a sigh, and whispered that she was too, too happy ! With such a mistress, and restored, so unexpectedly to the arms of a husband, whom, fondly as she loved him, she feared to have lost forever, what more could she desire !

Alas poor girl !—she forgot that we were slaves ;—and that the very next day might again separate us, subject us to other masters, and renew my tortures and her miseries !

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## CHAPTER II.

BEFORE we had half finished what we had to say to each other, the movement of the people on the hill-side informed us that the morning's religious services were over. Never before had one of my master's sermons seemed so short to me. We hastened towards the spot; I to receive my master's orders, and Cassy to attend upon her mistress. As we came near the rural pulpit, I observed Mr Carleton in conversation with two ladies, who proved to Mrs Montgomery and her daughter. We stopped at a little distance from them. Miss Montgomery looked around, and seeing us standing together, she beckoned to Cassy, and pointing to me, she inquired if that was the husband, who had put her into such a flutter that morning? This question drew the notice of the other two, and my master seemed a little surprised at seeing me in this new character. "What's this Archy" he said, "what is the meaning of all this? It is the first I ever heard of your being married. You don't pretend to claim that pretty girl there for your wife?"

I replied that she was indeed, my wife, though it was now some two years or more, since we had seen or known any thing of each other. I added, that I had never mentioned my marriage to him, because I had despaired of ever seeing my wife again; and now,

it was nothing but the merest accident that had brought us together.

“ Well Archy if she is your wife, I don't know how I can help it, though I suppose I shall have you spending half your time at Poplar-Grove ;—is not that what your place is called Mrs Montgomery ?”

She said it was ;—and after a moment's pause, observed, that too little respect, she feared, was often paid to the matrimonial connexions of servants. For her part, she could not but regard them as sacred ; and if Cassy and myself were really married, and I was a decent, civil fellow, she had no objection to my visiting Poplar-Grove, as often as Mr Carleton would permit me.

My master undertook to answer for my good behavior ; and turning to me, he bade me bring up the horses. I made all the haste I could ; but before I returned, Mrs Montgomery was gone, and Cassy with her. We mounted, and had already taken the road to Carlton-Hall, when my master seemed to recollect that I had just found a wife from whom I had been long separated ; and it began to occur to him, that possibly we might take some pleasure in being indulged with a little of one another's company. He gave me joy of my discovery, with an air half serious, half jocular,—as if in doubt whether a slave were properly entitled to a master's serious sympathy,—and remarked, in a careless tone, that perhaps I would like to spend the remainder of the day at Poplar-Grove.

As I knew that Mr Carleton had much real goodness of heart, I had long since learned to put up with

his cavalier manner ; and however little I might be pleased with the style in which he made the offer, the matter of his present proposal was so much to my fancy, that I eagerly caught at it. He took his pencil from his pocket, and wrote me a pass ; I asked and received such directions as he could give me about the way ; and putting spurs to my horse, I soon overtook Mrs Montgomery's carriage, which I followed to Poplar-Grove.

This was one of those pretty, and even elegant country seats, which are sometimes seen, though very seldom, in Virginia and the Carolinas ; and which may serve to prove that the inhabitants of those states, notwithstanding their almost universal negligence of such matters, are not totally destitute of all ideas of architectural beauty and domestic comfort. The approach to the house was through a broad avenue of old and venerable oaks. The buildings had the appearance of considerable antiquity ; but they were in perfect repair, and the grounds and fences were neat and well kept.

As the ladies left the carriage I came up. I told Mrs Montgomery that my master had given me leave to visit my wife, and I hoped she would have no objection to my spending the afternoon there.

Mrs Montgomery answered, that Cassy was too good a girl to be denied any reasonable indulgence ; and as long as I behaved well she would never make any objection to my coming to see her. She put me several questions about our marriage and separation ; and the softness of her voice and the unassuming gen-

tness of her manner, satisfied me that she was an amiable and kind-hearted woman.

No doubt, through the broad extent of slave-holding America, there are many amiable women, and good mistresses. Yet how little does their kindness avail ! It reaches only here and there. It has no power to alleviate the wretchedness or to diminish the tortures of myriads of wretches, who never hear a voice softer than the overseer's, and who know no discipline milder than the lash.

The house servants at Poplar-Grove, were treated with kindness and even with indulgence, and were much attached to the family ; but as happens in so many other cases, the situation of the field hands was extremely different. Some three years before, Mrs Montgomery, by her husband's death, and the will which he left, became the owner and sole mistress of the estate. Upon this occasion, her good nature, and her sense of justice, prompted her to extend the same humane system to the management of the plantation, which she had always acted upon, in the government of her own house-hold. During her husband's life, the servant's quarter had been three miles or more from the House ; and as the slaves were never allowed to come there, unless they were sent for, Mrs Montgomery saw scarcely any thing of them, and knew very little of their wants and grievances, and next to nothing of the general management of the estate. Indeed she spent the greater portion of every year, in visiting her relations in Virginia, or in trips to the northern cities ; and when at home, her husband's manifest disinclina-

tion to her having any thing to do with those matters, had always prevented her from meddling in any way, with the plantation affairs.

But when her husband was dead, and the plantation and slaves had become her own property, she could not reconcile herself to the idea of taking no thought, concern or care for the welfare and well-being of more than an hundred human creatures, who toiled from morning to night for her sole benefit. She resolved upon a total change of system ; and ordered the servant's quarter to be removed near the house, so that she might be able to go there daily and have an opportunity of inspecting and relieving the wants and grievances of her servants.

She was shocked at the miserable pittance of food and clothing which her husband had allowed them, and at the amount of labor which he had exacted. She ordered their allowances to be increased, and their tasks to be diminished. Several instances of outrageous severity having reached her ears, she dismissed her overseer and procured a new one. The servants no sooner discovered that their mistress had interested herself in their welfare, than she was overwhelmed with petitions, appeals and complaints. One wanted a blanket, another a kettle, and a third, a pair of shoes. Each asked for some trifling gift, which it seemed very hard to refuse ; and every request that was granted was followed by half-a-dozen others, equally trifling and equally reasonable. But before the end of the year, these small items amounted to a sum sufficient to swallow up half the usual profits of the plantation. Scarcely a day

passed, that Mrs Montgomery was not pestered with complaints about the severity of her new overseer ; and the servants were constantly coming to her to beg off from some threatened punishment. Two or three instances in which the overseer was checked for the tyrannical manner in which he exercised his authority, only served to increase this annoyance. She was perplexed with continual appeals, as to which she found it next to impossible to get at the truth ; since the overseer always told one story and the servants another. The second overseer was dismissed ; a third threw up his place in disgust ; and a fourth, who resolved to humor the indulgent disposition of his employer, suffered the hands to take their own course and to do pretty much as they pleased. Of course they did not care to work, while they had the choice of being idle. Every season, since Mrs Montgomery had commenced her experiments, the crop had fallen lamentably short ; but this year, there was scarcely any crop at all.

Her friends now thought it time to interfere. Her brother, whom she loved, and for whose opinion and advice she entertained a high regard, had all along, remonstrated against the course she was pursuing. He now spoke in a more decided tone. He told her, that the silly notions she had taken up about the happiness of her slaves, would certainly ruin her. Where was the need of being more humane than her neighbors ?—and what folly could be greater than to reduce herself and her children to beggary in the vain pursuit of a sentimental and impracticable scheme ?

Mrs Montgomery defended herself and her conduct with great earnestness. She pleaded her duty towards those unhappy beings whom God had placed in her power and under her protection. She even went so far as to hint at the injustice of living in luxury upon the fruits of forced labor ; and she spoke with much feeling of the savage brutality of overseers and the torture of the lash. Her brother replied, that such talk was very pretty, and generous, and philanthropic, and all that ; and while it went no further than talk, he had not the least objection to it. But pretty and philanthropic as it was, it would not make either corn or tobacco. She might talk as she pleased ; but if she expected to live by her plantation, she must manage it like other people. Every body who knew any thing about the matter would tell her, that if she wished to make a crop she must keep a smart overseer, put a whip into his hands, and give him unlimited authority to use it. If she would do this, she might justly call herself the mistress of the plantation ; but as long as she followed her present plan, she would be no better than the slave of her own servants ; and her philanthropy would end in their being sold for debt, and her being left a beggar.

These warm remonstrances made a deep impression upon Mrs Montgomery. She could not deny that the plantation had produced scarcely any thing since she had come into possession of it ; and she was conscious that after all her labors in their behalf, her servants were discontented, idle and insubordinate. However, she did not feel inclined to yield the point. She still

maintained that her ideas on the mutual relation of master and servant, were the obvious dictates of justice and humanity, which no one could despise or overlook, who made any pretensions to virtue or to conscience. She argued that the system, which she was attempting to introduce, was a good one; and that nothing was wanting except an overseer who had sense enough to carry it into judicious operation. Possibly there was something of truth in this. If she could have found a man like major Thornton, and made an overseer of him, she might perhaps have succeeded. But such men are seldom found any where, and in slave-holding America, very seldom indeed. Take the American overseers together, and they are the most ignorant, intractable, stupid, obstinate, and self-willed race that ever existed. What could a woman do, who could only act through assistance of this sort, and who had the prejudices of the whole neighborhood actively excited against her? Things went on from bad to worse. The ready money which her husband had left her was all spent, and her affairs soon became so entangled and embarrassed, that she was obliged to call upon her brother for assistance. He refused in the most positive manner, to have any thing to do with the business, unless she would surrender to him the sole and exclusive management of her affairs. To these hard terms, after a short and ineffectual struggle, she was obliged to consent.

He immediately took the plantation into his own hands. He removed the cabins to their former situation; revived the old rule that no servant should ever



go to the House unless speeially sent for ; reduced them to their former allowance of food and clothing ; and engaged an overseer on the express condition that Mrs Montgomery should never listen to any complaints against him, or intermeddle, in any way, with his management of the plantation.

Within the first month after this return to the old system, near one third of the working hands ran away. Mrs Montgomery's brother told her, that this was no more than might be expected ; for the raseals had been so spoiled and indulged as to render them quite impatient of the necessary and wholesome severity of plantation discipline. After long searehing, and a good deal of trouble and expense, the run-aways, execept one or two, were finally recovered ; and Poplar-Grove, under its new administration, passed by degrees to its ancient routine of whipping and hard labor. Once in awhile, notwithstanding all the pains that were taken to prevent it, some instance of severity would reach the ear of Mrs Montgomery ; and in the first burst of indignant feeling, she would sometimes declare, that the narrowest poverty would be far better, than the wealth and luxury for which she was indebted to the whip of the slave-driver. But the first burst of generous passion was no sooner over, than she acknowledged to herself, that to think of giving up the luxury to which she had been accustomed from her infancy, was out of the question. She strove to escape from the knowledge, and to banish the recollection of injustice and cruelty, which her heart condemned, but which she lacked the power, or rather the spirit, to remedy.

She fled from a home, where she was forever haunted by the spectre of that delegated tyranny, for which, however she might attempt to deny or disguise it, she could not but feel herself responsible ; and while her slaves toiled beneath the burning sun of a Carolina summer, and smarted under the lash of a stern and relentless overseer, she attempted to drown the remembrance of their wrongs in the dissipations and gaieties of Saratoga or New York.

But she was obliged to spend a part of the year at Poplar-Grove ; and with all her care, she could not always save her feelings from some rude brushes. Of this I had a striking instance on my first visit. One of her plantation hands had been so far indulged by the overseer, who, by the way, was a very rigid presbyterian, as to receive a pass to attend Mr Carleton's meeting. After the meeting was over, his mistress happened to see him there ; and as she wished to send a message to one of her neighbors, she called him to her, and sent him with it. It so happened that Mrs Montgomery's overseer, was at this neighbor's, when the servant arrived there with his mistress' message. The overseer no sooner saw him, than he inquired what business he had to come there, when his pass only allowed him to go to the meeting and return again. It was in vain that he pleaded his mistress' orders. The overseer said that made no difference whatever ; for Mrs Montgomery had nothing at all to do with the plantation hands ; and to impress this fact upon his memory he gave him a dozen lashes on the spot.

The poor fellow was bold enough to come to the

He would make his complaint to Mrs Montgomery. Nothing could exceed her anger and vexation. But her agreement with her brother left her without a remedy. She made the servant a handsome present ; told him that he had been very unjustly punished ; and begged him to go home and say nothing about it to anybody. She submitted to the mortification of making this request, in hopes of saving the poor fellow from a second punishment. But by some means or other, as I learned afterwards, the overseer found out what had been going on ; and to vindicate his supreme authority, and keep up the discipline of the plantation, inflicted a second whipping more severe than the first.

Such is the malignant nature and disastrous operation of the slave-holding system, that in too many instances, the sincerest good will, and best intended efforts in the slave's behalf, end only in plunging him into deeper miseries. It is impossible to build any edifice of good on so evil a foundation. The whole system is totally and radically wrong. The benevolence, the good nature, the humanity of a slave-holder, avail as little as the benevolence of the bandit, who generously clothes the stripped and naked traveler in a garment plucked from his own portmanteau. What more absurdity than the attempt to be humane to a slave, and generously unjust ! The very first act in the slave's behalf, without which, all else is useless and more than useless, is—to make him free !

## CHAPTER III.

I have before observed that Sunday is the slave's holiday. Where intermarriages are allowed between the slaves of different plantations, this is generally the only occasion on which the scattered branches of the same family are indulged with an opportunity of visiting each other. Many planters, who pride themselves upon the excellence of their discipline, forbid these intermarriages altogether ; and if they happen to have a superabundance of men-servants, they prefer that one woman should have a half-a-dozen husbands rather than suffer their slaves to be corrupted, by gadding about among other people's plantations.

Other managers, just as good disciplinarians, and a little more shrewd than their neighbors, forbid the men only to marry away from home. They are very willing to let their women get husbands where they can. They reason in this way. When a husband goes to see his wife, who lives upon another plantation, he will not be apt to go empty-handed. He will carry something with him, probably something eatable, plundered from his master's fields, that may serve to make him welcome and render his coming a sort of festival. Now every thing that is brought upon a plantation in this way, is so much clear gain ; and so far as it goes, it amounts to feeding one's people at the expense of one's neighbors !

Sunday, as I have said, is the day upon which are paid the matrimonial visits of the slave. But Sunday was no holiday to me ; for I was generally obliged, on that day, to attend my master upon his ecclesiastical excursions. To make up for this, Mr Carleton allowed me Thursday afternoons, so that I was able to visit Cassy at least once a week.

The year that followed, was the happiest of my life ; and with all the inevitable mortifications and miseries, which slavery, even under its least repulsive form, ever carries with it, I still look back to that year with pleasure,—a pleasure that still has power to warm a heart, saddened and embittered by a thousand painful recollections.

Before the end of the year, Cassy made me a father. The infant boy had all his mother's beauty ; and only he who is a father, and as fond a husband too as I was, can know the feelings with which I pressed the little darling to my heart.

No !—no one can know my feelings,—no one, alas, but he, who is, as I was, the father of a slave. The father of a slave !—and is it true then, that this child of my hopes and wishes, this pledge of mutual love, this dear, dear infant of whom I am the father, is it true he is not mine ?

Is it not my duty and my right, a right and duty dearer than life, to watch over his helpless infancy, and to rear him with all a father's tenderness and love, to a manhood, that will perhaps repay my care, and in turn, sustain and cherish me, a tottering weak old man ?

My duty it may be ; but it is not my right. A slave can have no rights. His wife, his child, his toil, his blood, his life, and every thing that gives his life a value, they are not his ; he holds them all but at his master's pleasure. He can possess nothing ; and if there is any thing he seems to have, it is only by a sufferance which exists but in his owner's will.

This very child, this very tender babe, may be torn from my arms, and sold to-morrow into the hands of a stranger, and I shall have no right to interfere. Or if not so ; if some compassion be yielded to his infancy, and if he be not snatched from his father's embraces and his mother's bosom while he is yet all unconscious of his misery, yet what a sad, wretched, desolate fate awaits him ! Shut out from every chance or hope of any thing which it is worth one's while to live for ; —bred up a slave !

That single word, what volumes it does speak ! It speaks of chains, of whips and tortures, compulsive labor, hunger and fatigues, and all the miseries our wretched bodies suffer. It speaks of haughty power, and insolent commands ; of insatiate avarice ; of pampered pride and purse proud luxury ; and of the cold indifference and scornful unconcern with which the oppressor looks down upon his victims. It speaks of crouching fear, and base servility ; of low, mean cunning and treacherous revenge. It speaks of humanity outraged ; manhood degraded ; the social charities of life, the sacred ties of father, wife and child trampled under foot ; of aspirations crushed ; of hope extinguished ; and the light of knowledge sacrilegiously

put out. It speaks of man deprived of all that makes him amiable or makes him noble ; stript of his soul and sunk into a beast.

And thou, my child, to this fate thou art born ! May heaven have mercy on thee, for man has none !

The first burst of instinctive and thoughtless pleasure, with which I had looked upon my infant boy was dissipated forever, the moment I had recovered myself enough to recollect what he was born to. Various and ever changing, but always wretched and distressing were the feelings with which I gazed at him, as he slept upon his mother's bosom, or waking, smiled at her caresses. He was indeed a pretty baby ;—a dear, dear child ;—and for his mother's sake I loved him, how I loved him ! Yet struggle as I might, I could not, for a moment, escape the bitter thought of what his fate must be. Full well I knew that did he live to be a man, he would repay my love, and justly, with curses, curses on the father who had bestowed upon him nothing but a life incumbered and made worse than worthless, by the inheritance of slavery.

I found no longer the same pleasure in Cassy's society, which it used to afford me ; or rather the pleasure which I could not but take in it, was intermingled with much new misery. I did not love her less ; but the birth of that boy had infused fresh bitterness into the cup of servitude. Whenever I looked upon him, my mind was filled with horrid images. The whole future seemed to come visibly before me. I saw him naked, chained, and bleeding under the lash ; I saw him a wretched, trembling creature, cringing to escape

it ; I saw him utterly debased, and the spirit of manhood extinguished within him ; already he appeared that worthless thing,—a slave contented with his fate !

I could not bear it. I started up in a phrensy of passion ; I snatched the child from the arms of his mother ; and while I loaded him with caresses, I looked about for the means of extinguishing a life, which, as it was an emanation from my existence, seemed destined to be only a prolongation of my misery.

My eyes rolled wildly, I doubt not ; and the stern spirit of my determination must have been visibly marked upon my face ; for gentle and unsuspecting as she was, and wholly incapable of that wild passion which tore my heart, my wife, with a mother's instinctive watchfulness, seemed to catch some glimpse of my intention. She rose up hastily, and without speaking a word, she caught the baby from my feeble and trembling grasp ; and as she pressed it to her bosom, she gave a look that told me all that she feared ; and told me too, that the mother's life was bound up in that of the child.

That look subdued me. My arms dropped powerless, and I sunk down in a sort of sullen stupor. I had been prevented from accomplishing my purpose, but I was not satisfied that in foregoing it, I did a father's duty to the child. The more I thought upon it—and it so engrossed me that I could scarcely draw my thoughts away,—the more was I convinced that it was better for the boy to die. And if the deed did peril my own soul, I loved the child so dearly that I did not shrink, even at that.



But then his mother.

I would have reasoned with her ; but I knew how vain would be the labor to array a woman's judgment against a mother's feelings ; and I felt, that one tear stealing down her cheek, one look of hers, like that she gave me when she snatched the child away, would, even in my own mind, far outbalance the weightiest of my arguments.

The idea of rescuing the boy, by one bold act, from all the bitter miseries that impended over him, had shot upon my mind, like some faint struggling star across the darkness of a midnight storm. But that glimmer of comfort was now extinguished. The child must live. The life I gave him, I must not take away. No ! not though every day of it would draw new curses on my devoted head,—and those too, the curses of my child. This, this alas ! is the barbed arrow that still is sticking in my heart ; the fatal, fatal wound that nought can heal.

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## CHAPTER IV.

ONE Sunday morning when the boy was about three months old, two strangers unexpectedly arrived at Carleton-Hall. In consequence of their coming, some urgent business occupied my master's attention, so that he found himself obliged to give up the meeting which he had appointed for that day. I was not sorry for it; for it left me at liberty to visit my wife and child.

It was the autumn. The heat of summer had abated, and the morning was bright and balmy. There was a soothing softness in the air; and the woods were clothed in a gay variety of colors, that almost outdid the foliage of the spring. As I rode along towards Poplar-Grove, the serenity of the sky, and the beauty of the prospect, seemed to breathe a peaceful pleasure to my heart. It was the more needed; for I had been a good deal irritated by some occurrences during the week; and every new indignity to which my situation exposed me, I now seemed to suffer twice over, once in my own person, and a second time, in anticipation for my child. I had set out in no very agreeable frame of mind; but the ride, the prospect and the fine autumnal air, had soothed me into a cheerful alacrity of spirit, such as I had hardly felt for some weeks past.

Cassy welcomed me with a ready smile, and those caresses which a fond wife bestows so freely on the hus-

band whom she loves. Her mistress, the day before, had given her some new clothes for the child, and she had just been dressing him out, to make the little fellow fit, she said, to see his father. She brought the boy and placed him on my knee. She praised his beauty ; and with her arm about my neck, she tried to trace his father's features in the baby's face. In the full flow of a mother's fond affection, she seemed unconscious and forgetful of the future ; and by a thousand tender caresses, and all the little artifices of a woman's love, she sought to make me forget it too. She had but little success. The sight of that poor, smiling, helpless and unconscious child, brought back all my melancholy feelings. Yet I could not bear to disappoint my wife's hopes and efforts ; and to make her think herself successful, I strove to affect a cheerfulness I did not feel.

The beauty of the day tempted us abroad. We walked among the fields and woods, carrying the child by turns. Cassy had an hundred little things to tell me of the first slight indications of intelligence which the boy was giving. She spoke with all a mother's fluency and fervor. I said but little ; indeed I hardly dared to speak at all. Had I once begun, I could not have restrained myself from going on ; and I did not wish to poison her pleasure, by an outpouring of that bitterness which I felt bubbling up, at the bottom of my heart.

The hours stole away insensibly, and the sun was already declining. I had my master's orders to be back that night ; and it was time for me to go. I

clasped the infant to my heart. I kissed Cassy's cheek and pressed her hand. She seemed not satisfied with so cold a parting ; for she threw her arms about my neck and loaded me with embraces. This was so different from her usual coy and timid manner, that I was at a loss to understand it. Is it possible that she felt some instinctive presentiment of what was going to happen ? Did the thought dart across her mind, that this might be our last, our final parting ?

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## CHAPTER V.

WHEN I got back to Carleton-Hall, I found every thing in the greatest confusion. It was not long before I was made acquainted with the cause. It seemed that some twelve months previous, Mr Carleton had found himself very much pressed for money. This had obliged him to look a little into his affairs. He found himself burdened with a load of debt of which before, he had no definite idea ; and as his numerous creditors, who had been too long put off with promises, were beginning to be very clamorous, he saw that some vigorous remedy was necessary. To borrow, seemed the most certain means of relief from the immediate pressure of

his debts ; and he succeeded in obtaining a large loan from some Baltimore money-lenders, of which he secured the repayment by a mortgage upon his slaves, including even the house servants and myself among the number. This money he expended in satisfying several executions, which had already issued against him ; and in stopping the mouths of the most clamorous of his creditors. The money was borrowed for a year ; not with any expectation on Mr Carleton's part, of being able to repay it in that time, out of any funds of his own ; but in the hope that before the year's end, he might succeed in obtaining a permanent loan, and so be enabled to cancel the mortgage.

In this expectation, he had hitherto been disappointed ; and he was yet negotiating with the persons from whom he expected to borrow, when the time of repayment, mentioned in the mortgage, expired. This happened about a month previous ; and when I got back to Carleton-Hall, I found that the strangers who had arrived that morning, were the agents of the Baltimore money-lenders, who had been sent to take possession of the mortgaged property. They had already caught as many of the slaves as they could find ; and I no sooner entered the house, than I was seized, and put under a guard. These precautions were thought necessary to prevent the slaves from running away, or concealing themselves from the agents of their new owners.

My poor master was in the greatest distress and embarrassment that could be imagined. It was in vain that he begged for delay, and proposed various terms of accommodation. The agents declared that they had

no discretion in the matter ; they were instructed to get either the money or the slaves ; and in case the money was not forthcoming, to proceed with the slaves to Charleston, in South Carolina, which, at that time, was esteemed the best market for disposing of that commodity.

As to paying the money at once, that was out of the question ; but Mr Carleton hoped that he might be able in the course of a few days, if not to obtain the loan for which he was negotiating, at least to get such temporary assistance as would enable him to discharge the mortgage. The agents agreed to give him twenty-four hours, but refused to wait any longer. Mr Carleton despaired of doing any thing in so short a time ; and did not think it worth his while to attempt it. The plantation hands must go ; there did not seem to be any remedy for that ; but he was very desirous to save his house servants from the slave-market, and he begged the agents not to leave him without a servant to make his bed or cook his dinner.

The agents replied that they were truly sorry for the disagreeable situation in which he found himself ; but that, since the mortgage was made, several of the slaves included in the schedule were dead ; that some of the others seemed hardly worth the sum at which they had been valued ; that the price of slaves had fallen considerably since the mortgage was made, and seemed likely to fall more ; and that every thing considered, they thought it more than doubtful whether the mortgaged property would be sufficient to satisfy the debt. However, they were desirous to indulge him as

far as their duty to their principals would allow ; and if he would pay the value of such of the slaves as he wished to retain, they had no objections to receive the money instead of the servants.

Mr Carleton had not fifty dollars in the house ; but he immediately started off to see what he could borrow in the neighborhood. Wherever he went, he found that the news of what had happened, had preceded him. Besides this Baltimore mortgage, he was known to owe many other debts ; and his neighbors generally looked upon him as a ruined man. Of course, the greater part of them felt no inclination to lend him their money ; and in fact, very many of them were not so much better off than Mr Carleton as to have much money to lend. After riding about the greater part of the day, he succeeded in borrowing a few hundred dollars, on condition however, that he should secure the repayment by a mortgage of such slaves as he should redeem. He had returned to the house a little before I did, and was already considering with himself which of his slaves he should retain. He told me that I had been a good and trust-worthy servant ; and that he was very unwilling to part with me. But he had not money enough to redeem us all ; and his old nurse and her family were entitled to be retained in preference to any of the rest of us. Not only were their services the most essential to him, but the mother had long been a favorite servant, her children were born and bred in his family, and he considered it a matter of conscience to keep them, at all events. The agent released those of the servants whom he selected. The

rest of us were kept confined, and received notice to be ready for a start, early the next morning.

I had yet one hope. I thought if Mrs Montgomery could be informed of my situation she would certainly buy me. I mentioned it to my master. He told me not to flatter myself too much with that idea ;—for Mrs Montgomery already had more servants about her house than she had any kind of use for. However, he readily undertook to write her a note explaining my situation. It was despatched by a servant, and I waited with impatient hope for the answer.

At last the messenger returned. Mrs Montgomery and her daughter had gone that morning to visit her brother, who lived some ten miles from Poplar-Grove, and they were expected to be absent three or four days. I believe I had heard something of this in the morning ; but in my hurry, confusion and excitement, it had escaped my memory.

My last hope was now gone ; and as it went, the shock I felt was dreadful. Till that moment, I had concealed from myself, the misery of my situation. I had been familiar with calamity, but this exceeded any thing I had ever suffered. It is true, I had once before been separated from my wife ; but my bodily pains, my delirium and fever had helped to blunt the agony of that separation. Now, I was torn from both wife and child !—and that too, without any thing to call off my attention, or to deaden the torture of conscious agony. My heart swelled with impotent passion, and beat as though it would leap from my bosom. My forehead glowed with a burning heat. I would



have wept ; but even that relief was denied me. The tears refused to flow ; the fever in my brain had parched them up.

My first impulse was, to attempt making my escape. But my new masters were too well acquainted with the business of legal kidnapping, to give me an opportunity. We were all collected in one of the out-houses and carefully secured. With many of the plantation hands, this was quite an unnecessary precaution. A large proportion of them were so sick and weary of the tyranny of Mr Carleton's overseer, that they were glad of any change ; and when their master made them a farewell visit, and began to condole with them upon their misfortune, several of them were bold enough to tell him that they thought it no misfortune at all ; for whatever might happen, they could not be worse treated than they had been by his overseer. Mr Carleton seemed not well pleased at this bold disclosure, and took his leave of us rather abruptly ; and certainly this piece of information could not have been very soothing to his feelings.

At early dawn we were put into traveling order. A waggon carried the provisions and the younger children. The rest of us were chained together and traveled in the usual fashion.

It was a long journey, and we were two or three weeks upon the road. Considering that we were slaves driven to market, we were treated on the whole, with unexpected humanity. At the end of the third or fourth day's journey, the women and children were released from their chains, and two or three days

later, and the men received the same indulgence. Those of whom they were more suspicious, were secured in irons. Our drivers seemed desirous to enhance our value by putting us into good condition. Our daily journey was quite moderate ; we were all furnished with shoes, and were allowed plenty to eat. At night we encamped by the road-side ; kindled a large fire, cooked our hominy, and made a hut of branches to sleep under. Several of the company declared that they were never so well treated in all their lives ; and they went along laughing and singing more like men traveling for pleasure, than like slaves going to be sold. So little accustomed is the slave to kindness or indulgence of any sort, that the merest trifle is enough to put him into ecstasy. The gift of a single extra meal is sufficient to make him fall in love even with a slave-driver.

The songs and laughter of my companions only served to aggravate my melancholy. They observed it, and did their best to cheer me. There never was a kinder-hearted company, and I found some relief even in their rude efforts at consolation ; for there is more power in the sympathy of the humblest human creature than the haughty children of luxury are apt to believe. I was a favorite among the servants at Carleton-Hall, because I had taken some little pains to be so ; for I had long since renounced that silly prejudice and foolish pride, which at an earlier period, had kept me aloof from my fellow servants, and had justly earned me, their hatred and dislike. Experience had made me wiser, and I no longer took sides with our oppressors by join-

ing them in the false notion of their own natural superiority ;—a notion founded only in the arrogant prejudice of conceited ignorance, and long since discarded by the liberal and enlightened ; but a notion which is still the orthodox creed of all America, and the principal, I might almost say the sole foundation, which sustains the iniquitous superstructure of American slavery. I had made it a point to gain the good will and affection of my fellow servants, by mixing among them ; taking an interest in all their concerns ; and rendering them such little services as my favor with Mr Carleton put in my power. Once or twice indeed, I had overstepped the mark, and got myself into very serious trouble by letting my master know what severities his overseer inflicted. But though my attempts at serving them were not always successful, their gratitude was not the less on that account.

When my companions observed my melancholy they stopped their songs, and having run through their few topics of condolence, they continued their conversation in a subdued and moderated tone, as if unwilling to irritate my feeling by what might seem to me, unseasonable merriment. I saw, and in my heart acknowledged the kindness of their intention ; but I did not wish that my sadness should cast a shade over what they enjoyed as a holiday ; the only holiday perhaps which their miserable fate would ever allow them. I told them that nothing would be so likely to cheer me, as to see them merry ; and though my heart was aching and ready almost to burst, I forced a laugh, and started a song. The rest joined in it ; the chorus

rose again loud as ever ; the laugh went round ; and the turbulence of their merriment soon allowed ~~me~~ to sink again into a moody silence.

I had the natural feelings of a man ; I loved my wife and child. Had they been snatched from me by death, or had I been separated from them, by some fixed, inevitable, natural necessity, I should have wept, no doubt, but my feelings would have been those of simple grief, unmixed with any more bitter emotion. But that the dear ties of husband and father, ties so twined about my inmost heart, should be thus violently severed, without a moment's warning, and at a creditor's caprice ; and he too the creditor of another ; to be thus chained up, torn from my home, and driven to market, there to be sold to pay the debts of a man who called himself my master ;—the thoughts of this stirred up within my soul a bitter hatred and a burning indignation against the laws and the people that tolerate such things ; fierce and deadly passions which tore my heart, distracted and tormented me, even more than my grief at the sudden separation.

But the more violent emotions ever tend to cure themselves. If the patient survive the first paroxysm, his mind speedily begins to verge towards its natural equilibrium. I found it so. The torture of furious but impotent emotions at first almost overpowered me. But my feelings softened by degrees ; till, at length, they subsided into a dull, but fixed and settled misery ; a misery which the impulse of temporary excitement may sometimes make me forget, but which, like the guilty man's remorse, is too deeply rooted to be ever eradicated.

## CHAPTER VI.

AT length we arrived at Charleston, the capital of South Carolina. We spent several days in recruiting ourselves after our long journey. As soon as we had recovered from our lameness and fatigues, we were dressed up in new clothes, and fitted out to show off to the best advantage. We were then exposed for the inspection of purchasers. The women and children, pleased with their new finery, seemed to enjoy the novelty of their situation, and appeared as anxious to find a master and to bring a high price, as though the bargain were actually for their own benefit. The greater part of our company were bought up by a single purchaser, and I among the rest. We were purchased by general Carter, a man of princely fortune, indeed one of the richest planters in South Carolina; and were immediately sent off to one of his plantations, at some distance from the city.

The lower country of South Carolina, from the Atlantic for eighty or an hundred miles inward, including more than half the state, is, with the exception I shall presently mention, one of the most barren, miserable, uninviting countries in the universe. In general, the soil is nothing but a thirsty sand, covered for miles and miles, with forests of the long-leaved pine. These tracts are called, in the expressive phrase of the country, *Pine Barrens*. For a great distance inland, these

Barrens preserve almost a perfect level, raised but a few feet above the surface of the sea. The tall, straight, branchless trunks of the scattered pines, rise like slender columns, and are crowned with a tuft of knarly limbs and long, bristly leaves, through which the breezes murmur with a monotonous sound, much like that of falling waters, or waves breaking on a beach. There is rarely any undergrowth, and the surface is either matted with the saw-palmetto, a low ever-green, or covered with a coarse and scattered grass, on which herds of half-wild cattle feed in summer, and starve in winter. The trunks of the pines scarcely interrupt a prospect, whose tedious sameness is only varied by tracts, here and there, of almost impenetrable swamp, thickly grown up with bays, water oaks, cypresses and other large trees, adown whose spreading branches and whitened trunks, the long dusky moss hangs in melancholy festoons, drooping to the ground, the very drape-ry of disease and death. The rivers, which are wide and shallow, swelled with the heavy rains of spring and winter, frequently overflow their low and marshy banks, and help to increase the extent of swampy ground,—the copious source of poisonous vapors and febrile exhalations. Even where the country begins to rise into hills, it preserves, for a long distance, its sterile character. It is a collection of sandy hillocks thrown together in the strangest confusion. In many places, not even the pine will grow; and the barren and thirsty soil, is clothed only with stunted bushes of the dwarf oak. In some spots

even these are wanting ; and the bare sand is drifted by the winds.

Throughout all this extent of country, of which, with all its barrenness, a great part might, and by the enterprising spirit of free labor doubtless would be, brought into profitable cultivation, there are only some small tracts, principally along the water courses, which the costly and thrifless system of slave labor has found capable of improvement. All the rest still remains a primitive wilderness, with scarcely any thing to interrupt its desolate and dreary monotony.

This description does not include the tract stretching along the sea-shore, from the mouth of the Santee to that of the Savannah, and extending in some places, twenty or thirty miles up the country. The coast between these rivers, is a series of islands ;—the famous *sea-islands* of the cotton markets ; and the main land, which is separated from these islands by innumerable narrow and winding channels, is penetrated, for some distance inland, by a vast number of creeks and inlets. The islands present a bluff shore and a fine beach towards the ocean, but the opposite sides are often low and marshy. They were originally covered with a magnificent growth of ever-green oaks. The soil is light ; but it possesses a fertility never yet attained in the dead and barren sands of the interior. These lands are protected by embankments from the tides and floods, and the fields are divided and drained by frequent dikes and ditches. Such of them as can be most conveniently irrigated with fresh water, are cultivated as rice-fields ;—the higher and dryer lands are em-

ployed in the production of the long staple, or sea-island cotton,—a species which excels every other in the length of its fibre, and almost rivals silk in strength and softness.

These beautiful districts present a strong contrast to the rest of the lower country of South Carolina. As far as the eye can stretch, nothing is to be seen but a smooth, level, highly-cultivated country, penetrated in every direction by creeks and rivers. The residences of the planters are often handsome buildings, placed on some fine swell, and shaded by a choice variety of trees and shrubbery. These houses are inhabited by their owners only in the winter. They are driven from home in the summer, partly by the tedium of a listless and monotonous indolence, and partly, by the unhealthiness of the climate, which is much aggravated by the rice cultivation. This absentee aristocracy congregates in Charleston, or dazzles and astonishes the cities and watering places of the north by its profuse extravagance and reckless dissipation. The plantations are left to the sole management of overseers, who, with their families, form almost the only permanent free population of these districts. The slaves are ten times as numerous as the free. The whole of this rich and beautiful country is devoted to the support of a few hundred families in a lordly, luxurious, dissipated indolence, which renders them useless to the world and a burden to themselves; and to contribute towards this same great end, more than an hundred thousand human beings are sunk into the very lowest depths of degradation and misery.



General Carter, our new master, was one of the richest of these American grandees. The plantation to which we were sent, was called Loosahachee; and though very extensive, was but one out of several which he owned. Coming as I did from Virginia, there were many things in the appearance of the country, and in the way in which things were managed, that were entirely new to me.

I and my companions who had always been accustomed to some small quantity of meat as a relish to our corn diet, found our mere unseasoned hominy neither so palatable nor so nourishing as we could wish. Being strangers and new-comers, we had not yet learned the customs of the country; and were quite unacquainted with many of the arts by which the Carolina slaves are enabled to eke out their scanty and insufficient allowance. Our only resource was an appeal to our master's generosity; and it happened, that about a fortnight after we were put upon the plantation, general Carter, with several of his friends, made a flying visit from Charleston to Loosahachee, to see how the crops were coming on. This we thought to be a good opportunity to get some improvement of our fare. We did not like to ask too much, lest our request should be rejected without ceremony. Indeed, we determined to be as moderate as possible; and after due consultation, it was resolved to petition our master for a little salt to season our hominy,—a luxury to which we had always been accustomed, but which was not included in the Loosahachee allowance, which consisted

simply of corn. My companions requested me to act as spokesman ; and I readily undertook to do so.

When general Carter and his friends came near my task, I walked towards him. He asked me what I meant by leaving my work in that fashion, and inquired what I wanted. I told him that I was one of the servants whom he had lately purchased ; that some of us were born and raised in Virginia and the rest in North Carolina ; that we were not used to living upon bare hominy without any thing to give it a relish ; and that we should take it as a very great favor if he would be kind enough to allow us a little salt.

He seemed to be rather surprised at the boldness of this request, and inquired my name.

"Archy Moore," I answered.

"Archy Moore!" he cried with a sneer,—“ and pray tell me how long it has been the fashion among you fellows to have double names ? You are the first fellow I ever owned, who was guilty of such a piece of impertinence ;—and a damned impertinent fellow you are. I see it in your eye. Let me beg leave to request of you, Mr Archy Moore, to be satisfied with calling yourself Archy, the next time I inquire your name.”

I had taken the name of Moore, since leaving Spring-Meadow ; an assumption not uncommon in Virginia, and which is there thought harmless enough. But the South Carolinians, who of all the Americans, seem to have carried the theory and practice of tyranny to the highest perfection, are jealous of every thing

that may seem in any respect, to raise their slaves above the level of their dogs and horses.

The words and manner of my master were sufficiently irritating, but I was not to be shuffled off in that way. I passed over his rebuke in silence, but ventured again, in the most respectful terms I could command, to renew the request, that he would be pleased to allow us a little salt to season our hominy.

“ You are a damned, unreasonable, dissatisfied set of fellows as ever I met with ! ” was the answer. “ Why boy, you eat me out of house and home already. It is as much as I can do to buy corn for you. If you want salt, is n’t there plenty of sea-water within five miles ? If you want it, you have nothing to do but to make it ? ”

So he said ; and as they wheeled their horses and rode away, he and his companions joined in a loud laugh at the wit and point of his answer.

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## CHAPTER VII.

AMONG Mr Carleton's servants, or rather the servants that had been Mr Carleton's, but who had now become the property of general Carter, was one named Thomas. While we had lived together at Carleton-Hall, I had contracted an intimacy with him, which we still kept up. He was of unmixed African blood, with good features, a stout muscular frame, and on several accounts, a very remarkable man.

His bodily strength, and his capacity for enduring privation and fatigue, were very uncommon ; but the character of his mind was still more so. His passions were strong and even violent ; but what is very rare among slaves, he had them completely under his control ; and in all his words and actions he was as gentle as a lamb. The truth was, that when quite young, he had been taken in hand by certain methodists, who lived and labored in his neighborhood ; and so strong and lasting were the impressions which their teaching made upon him, and so completely had he imbibed their doctrines, that it seemed as if several of the most powerful principles of human nature had been eradicated from his bosom.

His religious teachers had thoroughly inculcated into a soul, naturally proud and high-spirited, that creed of passive obedience and patient long-suffering, which under the sacred name of religion, has been often found

more potent than whips or fetters, in upholding tyranny and subduing the resistance of the superstitious and trembling slave. They had taught him, and he believed, that God had made him a servant ; and that it was his duty to obey his master, and be contented with his lot. Whatever cruelties or indignities the unprovoked insolence of unlimited authority might inflict upon him, it was his duty to submit in humble silence ; and if his master smote him on one cheek, he was to turn to him the other also. This, with Thomas, was not a mere form of words run through with, and then forgotten. In all my experience, I have never known a man over whom his creed appeared to hold so powerful a control.

Nature had intended him for one of those lofty spirits who are the terror of tyrants, and the bold assertors of liberty. But under the influence of his religion, he had become a passive, humble and obedient slave. He made it a point of duty to be faithful to his master in all things. He never tasted whiskey ; he would sooner starve than steal ; and he preferred being whipped to telling a lie. These qualities, so very uncommon in a slave, as well as his cheerful obedience, and laborious industry, had gained him the good will even of Mr Carleton's overseer. He was treated as a sort of confidential servant ; was often trusted to keep the keys and give out the allowance ;—and so scrupulously did he fulfil all that was required of him, that even the fretful caprice of an overseer had no fault to find. He had lived at Carleton-Hall more than ten years, and in all that time, had never once been whipped. What was

most remarkable and uncommon of all, at the same time that he obtained the confidence of the overseer, Thomas had succeeded in gaining the good will of his fellow servants. There never lived a kinder-hearted, better tempered man. There was nothing he was not ready to do for a fellow creature in distress ; he was ever willing to share his provisions with the hungry, and to help the weak and tired to finish their tasks. Besides, he was the spiritual guide of the plantation, and could preach and pray almost as well as his master. I had no sympathy for his religious enthusiasm, but I loved and admired the man ; and we had long been on terms of close intimacy.

Thomas had a wife, Ann, by name, a pretty, sprightly, good natured girl, whom he loved exceedingly. It was a great comfort to him,—indeed he regarded it as a special interposition of Providence in his behalf,—that when carried away from Carleton-Hall they had not been separated. Never was a man more grateful or more delighted than Thomas was, when he found that both he and Ann had been purchased by general Carter. That they should fall into the hands of the same owner was all he desired ; and he readily transferred to the service of general Carter all that zeal and devotion, which, as he had been taught to believe, a slave owes to his master. While all the rest of us, upon our first arrival at Loosahachee, had been complaining and lamenting over the hardness of our tasks and the poor and insufficient food which our new master allowed us, Thomas said not a word ; but had worked away with such zeal and vigor, that he soon

gained the reputation of being one of the best hands on the place.

Thomas' wife had an infant child but a few weeks old, who according to the Carolina fashion, was brought to her in the field to be nursed ;—for the Carolina planters, spendthrifts in every thing else, in all that regards their servants, are wonderful economists. One hot afternoon, Ann sat down beneath a tree, and took the infant from the hands of the little child herself scarcely able to walk, who had the care of it during the day. She had finished the maternal office, and was returning slowly, and perhaps rather unwillingly to her task, when the overseer rode into that part of the field. The name of our overseer was Mr Martin. He was one of those who are denominated smart fellows and good disciplinarians. He had established a rule that there was to be no loitering at Loosabachee. Walking was too lazy a pace for him ; if there was any occasion to go from one part of the field to another, it was to be in a run. Ann had perhaps forgotten, at all events, she was not complying with this ridiculous piece of discipline. This was no sooner observed by the overseer, than he rode up to her ; cursed her for a lazy vagabond ; and commenced beating her over the head with his whip. Thomas happened to be working close by. He felt every stroke ten times as keenly as though it had lighted upon his own shoulders. Here was a trial too strong for the artificial principles of any creed. He moved forward as though he would go to his wife's assistance. We who were by, begged him to stop ; and told him he would only

get himself into trouble. But the cries and shrieks of his wife made him deaf to our entreaties; he rushed forward; and before the overseer was aware, he seized his whip, snatched it from his hand; and demanded what he meant by beating a woman in that way for no offence whatever?

To judge from Mr Martin's looks, this was a display of spirit, or as he would call it, of insolence and insubordination, for which he was not at all prepared. He reined back his horse for a rod or two;—when, seeming to recollect himself, he put his hand into his coat-pocket and drew out a pistol. He cocked it and pointed it at Thomas, who dropped the whip and turned to run. Mr Martin fired; but his hand shook too much to enable him to take a very effectual aim; and Thomas continued his flight; leaped the fence; and disappeared in the thicket by which it was bordered.

Having put the husband to flight, the overseer turned to the wife who stood by trembling and crying. He was boiling over with rage and passion, and seemed determined to spend his fury on this helpless and unhappy woman. He called the driver of the gang, and two or three other men to his assistance, and bade them strip off her clothes.

The preparations being complete, Mr Martin commenced the torture. The lash buried itself in her flesh at every blow; and as the poor wretch threw up her gashed and gory arms, the blood ran down in streams. Her cries were dreadful. Used as I had been to similar scenes, my heart sickened and my



head grew dizzy. I longed to seize the monster by the throat and dash him on the ground. How I restrained myself I do not know. Most sure I am, that nothing but the base and dastard spirit of a slave could have endured that scene of female torture and distress, and not have interfered.

Before Mr Martin had finished, poor Ann sunk to the ground in a state of total insensibility. He ordered us to make a litter of sticks and hoe-handles, and to carry her to his house. We laid her down in the passage. The overseer brought a heavy chain, one end of which he put around her neck, and the other he fastened to one of the beams. He said her fainting was all pretence; and that if he did not chain her, she would be running away and joining her husband.

We were now all ordered into the woods to hunt for Thomas. We separated and pretended to examine every place that seemed likely to conceal him; but with the exception of the drivers, and one or two base fellows who sought to curry favor with the overseer, I do not believe that any of us felt any great anxiety or took much pains to find him. Not far from the fence was a low swampy place, thickly grown up with cane and gum-trees. As I was making my way through it, I came suddenly upon Thomas, who was leaning against the trunk of a large tree. He laid his hand upon my shoulder, and asked what the overseer had done to his wife. I concealed from him, as well as I could, the miserable torture which had been inflicted upon her; but I told him that Mr Martin was all fire and fury, and that it would be best for him to

keep out of the way till his passion could subside a little. I promised to return in the evening and to bring him food. In the mean time, if he would lie close, there would be little danger that any one would find him.

We were presently called back from our ineffectual search and ordered to resume our tasks. I finished mine as quickly as I could ; hastened home, got some food ready, and went to see poor Ann. I found her lying in the passage chained as we had left her. Her low moans showed that she had so far recovered herself as to be once more sensitive to pain. She complained that the chain about her neck hurt her and made it difficult to breathe. I stooped down and was attempting to loosen it, when Mrs Martin made her appearance at the door ; she asked what right I had to meddle with the girl ; and bade me go about my business. I would have left the food I had brought ; but Mrs Martin told me to take it away again ; it would learn the wench better manners, she said, to starve her for a day or two.

I took up my little basket, and went away with a heavy heart. As soon as it grew dark, I set off to meet Thomas ; but lest my steps might be dogged by the overseer or some of his spies, I took a very round-about course. I found him near the place where I had met him before. His earnest entreaties to know the whole, drew from me the story of his poor wife's sufferings and her present situation. It moved him deeply. At intervals he wept like a child ;—then he strove to restrain himself, repeating half aloud, some

texts of scripture, and what seemed a sort of prayer. But all would not do ; and carried away at last, by a sudden gust of passion, forgetful of all his religious scruples, he cursed the brutal overseer with all the energy of a husband's vengeance. Presently he recovered his self command, and began to take fault to himself, ascribing all the blame to his own foolish interference. The thought that what his affection for his wife had prompted him to do, had only served to aggravate her sufferings, seemed to agitate him almost to distraction. Again, the tide of passion swept all before it. His countenance grew convulsed ; his bosom heaved ; and he only found relief in half uttered threats and muttered execrations.

He consulted with me as to what he had better do. I knew that the overseer was terribly incensed against him. I had heard him say, that if such a daring act of insolence was not most signally punished, it would be enough to corrupt and disorder the whole neighborhood. I was aware that Mr Martin would not dare absolutely to put him to death. But this prohibition to commit murder is the sole and single limit to an overseer's authority ; and I knew that he had both the right and the will to inflict a torture compared to which the agonies of an ordinary death-struggle would be but trifling. I therefore advised Thomas to fly ; since even if he were caught at last, no severer punishment could be inflicted upon him than he would be certain of, upon a voluntary surrender.

For a moment, this advice seemed to please him ; and an expression of daring determination appear-

ed in his face, such as I had never seen there before. But it disappeared in an instant. "There is Ann," he said, "I cannot leave her, and she, poor timid thing, even if she were well, I could never persuade her to fly with me. It will not do, Archy; I cannot leave my wife!"

What could I answer?

I understood him well, and knew how to sympathise with him. I could not but admit the force of his objection. Such feelings I knew it would be in vain to combat with arguments; indeed I could not make up my mind to attempt it. As I had no other advice to give, I remained silent.

Thomas seemed lost in thought, and continued for some minutes with his eyes fixed upon the ground. Presently he told me that he had made up his mind. He was determined, he said, to go to Charleston and appeal to his master.

The little I had known of general Carter, did not incline me to put much dependence on his justice or generosity; but as Thomas seemed pleased with this plan, and as it was his only chance, I applauded it. He ate the food I had brought, and determined to set off immediately. He had only been once to Charleston, during all the time we had been at Loosahachee; but as he was one of those people, who, if they have been once to a place, find little difficulty in going a second time, I had no doubt of his finding his way to town.

I returned to my cabin; but I was so anxious and uncertain about the success of Thomas, in the scheme

he had adopted, that I could not sleep. At daylight I went to my task. My anxiety acted as a stimulus upon me, and I had finished long before any of my companions. As I was passing from the field to my cabin, I saw general Carter's carriage driving up the road ; and as it passed me I observed poor Thomas behind, chained to the footman's stand.

The carriage drove up to the house. General Carter got out of it, and sent off in great haste for Mr Martin, who had taken his gun and dog early that morning, and had been beating about the woods all day, in search of Thomas. In the mean time, general Carter ordered all the hands on the plantation to be collected.

At last Mr Martin arrived. The moment general Carter saw him, he cried out—"Well sir, here is a run-away, I have brought back for you. Would you believe it?—the fellow had the impertinence to come to Charleston with the story of his grievances ! Even from his own account of the matter, he was guilty of the greatest insolence I ever heard of. Snatching the whip from the hand of an overseer ! Things are coming to a pretty pass indeed, when these fellows undertake to justify such insubordination. The next thing we shall hear of, they will be cutting our throats. However, I stopped the scoundrel's mouth before he had said five words. I told him, I would pardon any thing sooner than insolence to my overseer. I would much sooner excuse impertinence towards myself. And to let him know what I thought of his conduct, here you see I have brought him back to you ; and I have done it myself, even at the risk of being obliged to sleep

here to-night and catching the country fever. Whip the rascal! Mr Martin! whip him well! I have had all the hands collected, that they might see the punishment and take warning by it."

Mr Martin thus invited, sprung upon his prey with a tiger's ferocity. But I have no inclination to disgust myself with another description of the horrid torment of which in America, the whip is the active and continual instrument. He who is curious in these matters, will do well to spend six months upon an American plantation. He will soon discover that the rack was a superfluous invention; and that the whip, by those well skilled in the use of it, can be made to answer any purposes of torture.

Though Thomas was quite cut up with the lash, and whipped by two drivers till he fainted from pain and loss of blood, such was the nerve and vigor of his constitution, and the noble firmness of his mind, that he stood it like a hero, and disdained to utter any of those piercing screams and piteous cries for mercy, which are commonly heard upon the like occasions. He soon got over the effects of this discipline; and in a few days was at work again as usual.

Not so with his wife. She was naturally of a slender constitution, and perhaps had not entirely recovered from the weakness incident upon child-birth. Either the whipping she had suffered, or her chains and starvation afterwards, or both together, had brought on a violent disorder, of which at first, she seemed to get better, but which left her suffering under a dull nervous fever, without strength or appetite, or even the desire

of recovery. Her poor baby seemed to sympathise with its mother, and pined from day to day. At length it died. The mother did not long survive it. She lingered for a week or two. Sick as she was, she had no attendant except a superannuated old woman who could neither see nor hear. Thomas of course was obliged to go to his tasks as usual. He returned one night, and found her dead.

One of the drivers, a mean spirited fellow, and Mr Martin's principal spy and informer, was the only person allowed to preach at Loosahachee, and to act as the leader in those mummeries to which the ignorant and superstitious slaves give the name of religion. He paid a visit to the afflicted husband, and offered his services for the funeral. Thomas had so much natural good sense, that he was not, like many persons of his way of thinking, imposed upon and taken in, by every one who chose to make use of the cant of sanctity. He had long ago seen through this hypocritical fellow, and learned to despise him. He therefore declined his assistance; and pointing to me "himself and his friend," he said, "would be sufficient to bury the poor girl." He seemed about to add something more; but the mention of his wife had overpowered him; his voice choaked, his eyes filled with tears, and he was constrained to be silent.

It was a Sunday. The preacher soon left us; and poor Thomas sat the whole day watching his wife's body. I remained with him; but I knew how useless any attempt at consolation would be, and I said but little.

Towards sun-set, several of our fellow servants came in ; and they were presently followed by most of the plantation people. We took up the body and carried it to the place of burial. This was a fine smooth slope covered with tall trees. It seemed to have been long used for its present purpose. Numerous little ridges, some of them new, and others just discernable, indicated the places of the graves.

The husband leaned over the body, while we busied ourselves in the sad office of digging its last resting place. The shallow grave was soon finished. We all remained silent, in expectation of a prayer, a hymn, or some similar ceremony. Thomas attempted once or twice to begin ; but his voice rattled in his throat, and died away in an inarticulate murmur. He shook his head, and bade us place the body in the grave. We did so ; and the earth was soon heaped upon it.

It was already growing dark ; and the burial being finished, those who had attended at it, hastened homeward. The husband still remained standing by the side of the grave. I took his arm, and with a gentle force, would have drawn him away. He shook me off, and raising his hand and head, he muttered in a low whisper, " murdered, murdered ! " As he spoke these words, he turned his eyes on me. There gleamed in them, a spirit of passionate and indignant grief. It was plain that natural feeling was fast gaining the mastery over that system of artificial constraint in which he had been educated. I sympathised with him ; and I pressed his hand to let him know I did so. He returned the pressure ; and after a short pause, he added " blood for



blood ; is it not so, Archy ?” There was something terrible in the slow, but firm and steady tone in which he spoke. I knew not what to answer ; nor did he appear to expect a reply. Though he addressed me, the question seemed intended only for himself. I took his arm, and we walked off in silence.

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#### CHAPTER VIII.

It is customary in South Carolina, to allow the slaves the week from Christmas to the new year, as a sort of holiday. This indulgence is extended so far, that during that week, they are, for the most part, allowed to leave the plantations, the scenes of their daily labors and sufferings, and to wander about in the neighborhood, pretty much at their own will and pleasure. The high-ways present at that season, a singular appearance. The slaves of every age and sex, collected from the populous plantations of the tidewaters, and dressed in the best attire they have been able to muster, assemble in great numbers, swarming along the road, and clustering about the little whiskey-shops, producing a scene of bustle and confusion, witnessed only at the Christmas holidays.

Those shops are principally supported by a traffic with the slaves for stolen rice and cotton,—a traffic which all the vindictive fury of the planters, backed by an abundant legislation, has not been able to eradicate. They are the chief support, in fact, the only means of livelihood, open to a considerable portion of the lower order of the white aristocracy of the country. It is the same in Carolina as in Lower Virginia. The poor whites are extremely rude and ignorant, and acquainted with but few of the comforts of civilized life. They are idle, dissipated, and vicious ; with all that vulgar brutality of vice, which poverty and ignorance render so conspicuous and disgusting. Without land, or at best, possessing some little tract of barren and exhausted soil, which they have neither skill nor industry to render productive ; without any trade or handicraft art ; and looking upon all manual labor as degrading to freemen, and fit only for a state of servitude,—these poor white men have become the jest of the slaves, and are at once, feared and hated by the select aristocracy of rich planters. It is only the right of suffrage which they possess, that preserves them the show of consideration and respect with which they are yet treated. This right of suffrage, of which the select aristocracy are extremely anxious to deprive them, is the only safeguard of the poor whites. But for this, they would be trampled under foot without mercy ; and by force of law and legislation, would soon be reduced to a condition little superior to that of the very slaves themselves.

On the Christmas holidays which succeeded my

becoming an inhabitant of Loosahachee, a great number of slaves, of whom, I was one, were assembled about a little store on the neighboring high road, laughing, talking, drinking whiskey and making merry after our several fashions. While we were thus employed, I observed riding along the road, a mean looking fellow, shabbily dressed, with a face of that disagreeable cadaverous hue that makes the inferior order of whites in Lower Carolina look so much like walking corpses. He was mounted on a lean scraggy horse, whose hips seemed just bursting through the skin, and he carried in his hand an enormous whip, which he handled with a familiar grace, seldom acquired except by an American slave-driver. As he passed us, I noticed that all the slaves who had hats, pulled them off to him ; but as I did not see any thing in the fellow's appearance that demanded any particular respect, and as I was ignorant of the Carolina etiquette, which requires from every slave an obsequious bearing towards every free-man, seldom expected in Virginia, I let my hat remain upon my head. The fellow noticed it ; reined up his jaded beast, and eyed me sharply. My complexion made him doubt whether I might not be a free-man ; my dress and the company I was in, gave him equal grounds for supposing me a slave. He inquired who I was ; and being told that I was one of general Carter's people, he rode towards me with his upraised whip, demanding why I did not take off my hat to him ; and without waiting for an answer, he began to lay the lash over my shoulders. The fellow was evidently drunk, and my first impulse was to take the

whip away from him. Luckily I did not yield to this impulse; for any attempt to resist even a drunken white man, though that resistance was only in repelling the most unprovoked attack, according to the just and equal laws of Carolina, might have cost me my life.

I learned upon inquiry that this fellow had been an overseer; but some time previous had been discharged by his employer for suspected dishonesty. Not long after, he had set up a whiskey shop about half a mile distant. From what he said to the owner of the store where we were assembled, it would seem that his shop had not been so much frequented during the holidays as he had expected; and in beating me, he had vented his drunken spite and ill humor on the first object that gave him any thing like a pretence to exercise it. I learned too, that this fellow whose name was Christie, was a cousin of Mr Martin, our overseer. They had been close friends; but had lately had a violent quarrel. Christie had stabbed Martin; and Martin had shot at Christie with his double-barrelled gun. He had taken a still more effectual revenge by doing his best to stop the trade from Loosahachee to Christie's shop, which he had formerly winked at, and which had been carried on, much to Christie's benefit, by the exchange of well watered whiskey for general Carter's rice and cotton.

I no sooner heard this account of Mr Christie, than it occurred to me that I had him in my power; and at once, I resolved to make him smart in his turn, for the lashes he had inflicted upon me. It is true, I was obliged to play the part of a spy and an informer; but

such low means are the only resource which the condition of servitude allows. As soon as I got home, I hastened to the overseer, and with an abundance of hypocritical pretences and professions of zeal for my master's service, I communicated to him as a great secret, the fact that Mr Christie was in the habit of trading with the hands, and buying whatever they brought him, without asking any questions.

Mr Martin said that he was well aware of it ; and he would give me five dollars, if I would help him to detect Christie in the fact.

We quickly struck up a bargain. The overseer furnished me with a quantity of cotton ; and I set off, one moon-light night, to pay a visit to Mr Christie's shop.

He recognized me at once, and jested a good deal, about the whipping he had given me. He thought it an excellent joke ; and it best answered my purpose to appear very much of the same opinion. I found him not at all disinclined to trade, provided I would exchange my cotton for his whiskey, at the nominal price of a dollar a quart. It was not long before I paid him a second visit. That time, Mr Martin and one of his friends were posted outside the shop, at a place where they could peep between the logs and see and overhear the whole transaction.

To buy rice, cotton, or in fact any thing else of a slave, unless he produces a written permit from his master to sell it, according to the Carolina statute-book, is one of the most enormous crimes a man can commit. Mr Christie was indicted at the next court.

He was found guilty on the express testimony of Mr Martin and his companion ; and was fined a thousand dollars and sentenced to a year's imprisonment. The fine swept away what little property he had ; and how his imprisonment ended I never heard. More than one of the jurymen who convicted him, were grievously suspected of the very same practices ; but the dread of incurring fresh suspicion, or perhaps the jealous rivalry of trade, made those very fellows the most clamorous for his condemnation.

Mr Martin was so well pleased with my services in this affair,—in which he fancied I had put myself forward merely to be used as his cat's-paw,—that he took me quite into favor, and began to employ me as one of his regular spies and informers. Tyranny, whether on the great scale or the little, can only be sustained through a system of espionage and betrayal, in which the most mean-spirited of the oppressed are turned into the tools and instruments of oppression. There are many alleviations of the wretchedness of slavery to be expected from the favor and indulgence of an overseer. Let it be remembered also, that so strong are the allurements which power holds out, that even among freemen, there are hundreds of thousands always to be found, who are ready to assist in sacrificing the dearest rights of their neighbors, by volunteering to be the instruments of superior tyrants. What then can be reasonably expected from those who have been studiously and systematically degraded ? What wonder, if among the oppressor<sup>d</sup> are found the readiest and most relentless instruments of oppression ?

As I knew I could turn Mr Martin's favor to good account, I took care not to let him suspect, with what scorn and loathing I regarded the office in which he sought to employ me. But while he imagined that I was engaged heart and hand in his service, I counter-worked him more than once, by communicating his plans and stratagems to those whom he sought to entrap. This same Mr Martin, though he was absolute viceroy over more than three hundred people, was a very ignorant and a very stupid fellow. Several circumstances occurred, which with a shrewd person would have betrayed me ; but I succeeded so completely in blinding Mr Martin's eyes, that he still continued to place an unlimited confidence in my fidelity. Of this, he soon gave me a new proof ; for riding one day, into the field, where I was at work, and not finding matters going on just to suit him, he called out the driver of the gang, and took from him the whip, which he carried as the badge and principal instrument of his office. He then called for me ; and having given me twenty or thirty lashes, according to the custom in such cases, he put the whip into my hand, appointed me driver of the gang, and bade me do the first duty of my new office upon the fellow to whose place I had succeeded.

It is under the inspection of drivers, who are appointed from among the slaves, at the will of the overseer, that the cultivation of a Carolina plantation is carried on. The overseers have learned too much of the airs and the luxurious indolence of their employers, to be willing to be riding about all day, in the hot sun,

looking after the laborers. The slaves are divided into gangs, and each gang is put under the charge of a driver, who is generally selected for his cowardly and mean-spirited subserviency, and his willingness to tyrannise over and to betray his companions. The driver is entrusted with all the unlimited and absolute authority of the master himself. He receives a double allowance ; he has no task ;—his sole business is to look after his gang and see that they perform the work assigned them ; and for this purpose he takes his station in the midst of them whip in hand. When the overseer makes his appearance in the field, all the drivers collect about him to receive his orders. For the performance of the work assigned to his gang, each driver is himself responsible ; and that he may perfectly understand by what means he is to enforce its performance, the overseer usually inducts him into office by giving him a severe castigation with the very whip which he afterwards puts into his hand to be used upon his companions.

The absolute power of an overseer, is often, I ought rather to say always, shockingly abused ; but the absolute power of drivers is yet one step higher towards the perfection of tyranny. The driver faithfully copies all the arrogance and insolence of the overseer from whom he receives his commission ; and as he is always among his gang, the aggravating weight of his authority is so much the heavier. He is but one of themselves ; and the slaves are naturally more impatient of his rule, than they would be of the same dominion, exercised by one belonging to what they have been taught to



regard as a superior race ; and whom, as being a free-man, they are ready to acknowledge as actually their superior. Besides, the drivers are far from limiting their demands, as the overseer himself generally would do, to the performance of the field labor. They have a thousand little spite to gratify ; a thousand purposes of their own to accomplish. They are in fact, the absolute masters of every thing which any of their gang may happen to possess ; and the persons of the women are as much at their disposal as at that of the overseer or the master. Even, if by chance, a driver should happen not to be disposed to abuse his authority, the dread of losing his situation, and the knowledge that all the deficiencies of any of his subordinates will be visited upon his head, makes him of necessity, hasty, harsh and cruel.

Heaven is my witness that while I held the office of driver, my great object was, to use the authority which it gave me, to alleviate as far as I could, the misery of my companions. My gang consisted of the Carleton hands, with whom I had long been connected, and whom I looked upon as friends and fellow sufferers. Many is the time, when I have seen one and another fainting under his task, and unable to finish it, that I have dropped the whip, seized the hoe, and instead of of the stimulus of the lash, have used the encouragement of aid and assistance. This I did repeatedly ; though Mr Martin, more than once, when he found me so employed, expressed his disapprobation, and told me it was no way, and would only bring the station of driver into contempt.

But it is no part of my purpose to write an eulogium on myself; and I shall not hesitate to confess the whole truth. There were times that I abused my office;—and I verily believe that no man ever exercised an unlimited authority who did not abuse it. The consciousness of my power, made me insolent and impatient;—and with all my hatred, my hearty, experimental hatred of tyranny, the whip had not long been placed in my hands, before I caught myself in the act of playing the tyrant.

Power is ever dangerous and intoxicating. Human nature cannot bear it. It must be constantly checked, controled and limited, or it declines inevitably into tyranny. Even all the endearments of the family connexion; the tenderness of conjugal love, and the heart-binding ties of paternity, seconded as they always are by the controlling influence of habit and opinion, have not made it safe to entrust the head of a family with absolute power even over his own household. What terms then are strong enough in which to denounce the vain, ridiculous and wanton folly of expecting any thing but abuse where power is totally unchecked, by either moral or legal control?

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## CHAPTER IX.

SINCE the death of his wife, a remarkable change had taken place in my friend Thomas. He had lost his former air of contentment and good nature, and had grown morose and sullen. Instead of being the most willing and industrious laborer in the field, as he used to be, he seemed to have imbibed a strong distaste for work, and he slighted and neglected his task as much as possible. Had he been under any other driver than myself, his idleness and neglect would have frequently brought him into trouble. But I loved and pitied him; and I screened him all I could.

The wrongs and injuries that had been inflicted upon him since his arrival at Loosahachee, seemed to have subverted all the principles upon which he had so long acted. It was a subject on which he did not seem inclined to converse, and upon which I was unwilling to press him; but I had abundant reason to suspect that he had totally renounced the religion in which he had been so carefully instructed; and which, for so long a time, had exercised so powerful an influence over him. He had secretly returned to the practice of certain wild rites, which in his early youth, he had learned from his mother, who had herself been kidnapped from the coast of Africa, and who had been, as he had often told me, zealously devoted to her country's superstitions. He would sometimes

talk wildly and incoherently about having seen the spirit of his departed wife, and of some promise he had made to the apparition ; and I was led to believe that he suffered under occasional fits of partial insanity.

At all events, he was in most respects, an altered man. He had ceased to be the humble and obedient slave, contented with his lot, and zealously devoted to his master's service. Instead of promoting his master's interest, it seemed now to be his study and his aim to do as much mischief as possible. There were two or three artful, daring, unquiet spirits on the plantation, from whom till lately, he had kept aloof, but whose acquaintance he now sought, and whose confidence he soon obtained. They found him bold and prudent, and what was more, trusty and magnanimous ; and they soon gave place to his superiority of intellect, and acknowledged him as their leader. They were joined by some others, whose only motive was the desire of plunder, and they extended their depredations to every part of the plantation.

In this new character, Thomas still gave evidence that he was no ordinary man. He conducted his enterprises with singular address ; and when all other stratagems by which to save his companions from detection failed him, he had still one resource that proved the native nobleness of his soul. Such was the steady firmness of his mind, and the masculine vigor of his constitution, that he was enabled to do what few men could. He could brave even the torture of the lash—a torture, as I have said already, not less terrible than that of the rack itself. When every other

resource failed him, he was ready to shield his companions by a voluntary confession ; and to concentrate upon himself a punishment, which he knew that some among them were too feeble and faint-hearted to endure. Magnanimity such as this, is esteemed even in a freeman the highest pitch of virtue ;—how then shall we sufficiently admire it in a slave ?

Thank God, tyranny is not omnipotent !

Though it crush its victims to the earth ; and tread them into the dust ; and brutify them by every possible invention ; it cannot totally extinguish the spirit of manhood within them. Here it glimmers ; and there it secretly burns ; sooner or later, to burst forth in a flame, that will not be quenched and cannot be kept under !

So long as I was in the confidence of Mr Martin, I was able to render Thomas essential service, by informing him of the suspicions, plans, and stratagems of the overseer. It was not long however, before I forfeited that confidence ; not because Mr Martin entertained any suspicions of my playing him false,—for it was very easy to throw dust in the eyes of so stupid a fellow,—but because I did not come up to his notions of the spirit and the duty of a driver. The season was sickly ; and as the hands who composed my gang were from a more northern climate, and not yet seasoned to the pestiferous atmosphere of a rice plantation, they suffered a good deal from sickness, and several of them were often unable to work. I had explained this to Mr Martin, and he seemed to be satisfied with my explanation ; but riding into the field one

day, in a particular bad humor, and I believe, a little excited with liquor, he got into a towering rage at finding not half my gang in the field, and more than half the tasks untouched.

He demanded the reason.

I told him that the hands were sick.

He swore they had no business to be sick ; he was tired, he said, of this talk about sickness ; he knew very well it was all sham ; and he was determined to be imposed upon no longer. " If any more complaints are made of sickness, Archy, you have nothing to do but to whip the scoundrels and set them to work."

" What" said I, " if they are really sick ?"

" Sick or not sick, I tell you. If they are not sick a whipping is no more than they deserve ; and if they are, why nothing is so likely to do them good as a little blood-letting."

" In that case," said I, " you had better appoint another driver ; I should make but a poor hand at whipping sick people."

" Hold your tongue, you damned insolent black-guard. Who gave you leave to advise me or dispute my orders ? Hand me your whip, you rascal."

I did so ; and Mr Martin thereupon administered upon me a fresh infliction of that same discipline he had bestowed when he first put the whip into my hand. So ended my driver-ship ; and though I now lost my double allowance, and was obliged to turn into the field again, and perform my task like the other hands, I cannot say that I much regretted it. It was a pitiful

and sorry office, which no one but a scoundrel ever ought to undertake.

I now united myself more closely to the party of Thomas, and joined heart and hand in all their enterprises. Our depredations became at last so considerable, that Mr Martin was obliged to establish a regular watch, consisting of his drivers and a few of their subordinates, who kept prowling about the plantation all night, and made it unsafe to venture into the fields. This arrangement was hastened by a circumstance that happened upon the plantation, about which a very strict inquiry was instituted, but which led to no definite result. On one and the same night, general Carter's splendid plantation-seat, and his expensive rice mills were discovered to be on fire; and notwithstanding all efforts to save them, both were totally consumed. Several of the slaves, and Thomas among the rest, were put to a sort of torture to make them acknowledge some participation in this house-burning. That cruelty availed nothing. They all stoutly denied knowing any thing about it. I was, as I have said, very much in Thomas' confidence; yet he never spoke to me about this fire. As he was one of those men who know how to keep their own secrets, I always suspected that he knew much more about the matter, than he chose to divulge.

At all events, it was evidently a much more potent feeling, than the mere love of plunder by which Thomas was actuated. Since his wife's death, he sometimes drank to excess; but this was seldom, and there never was a man more temperate in his meats and

drinks, or less fastidious than Thomas generally was. He had formerly dressed with much neatness ; now he neglected his dress altogether. He did not love society ; he had little intercourse with any body except with me ; and it was not always that he seemed to wish even for my company. Thomas had little use for his share of the plunder ; and in fact, he generally distributed it among his companions.

When the thing was first proposed, he seemed to have little inclination to extend our depredations beyond the limits of Loosahachee. But as it was no longer safe to continue them there ; and as his company had rioted too long in plunder to be willing to relinquish it, Thomas yielded at last to their urgent solicitations, and led us, night after night, to the neighboring plantations. We soon pushed our proceedings so far, as to attract the notice of the overseers, whose domains we had invaded. At first, they supposed that the thieves were to be looked for at home ; and numberless were the severities they exercised upon those whom they suspected. But in spite of all their cruelties, the depredations were still continued ; and such was the singular art and cunning which Thomas displayed, in varying the scene and manner of our visits, that for a long time, we escaped all the traps and ambushes that were planned to detect us.

We were one night, in a rice field, and had almost filled our bags, when the watchful ear of Thomas detected a sound, as if of some one cautiously approaching. He supposed it might be the patrol, which, of late, instead of whiling away their time by the help of



a fiddle and a bottle of whiskey, had grown more active, and actually performed some of the duties of a night watch. Under this impression, he gave a signal for us to steal off quietly, in a certain order which he had arranged before hand. The field was bordered on one side, by a deep and wide river, from which it was protected by a high embankment. We had come by water ; and our canoe lay in the river, under the shade of a clump of bushes and small trees which grew upon the dike. One by one, we cautiously stole over the bank, carefully keeping in the shade of the bushes, and all but Thomas were already in the boat. We were waiting for our leader, who, as usual, was the last man in the retreat, when we heard several shouts and cries, which seemed to indicate that he was discovered, if not taken. The sound of two musket shots fired in rapid succession, increased our terror. We hastily shoved the boat from the shore; and pushing her into the current of the flood-tide, which was setting up the river, we were carried rapidly and silently out of sight of our landing place. The shouts were still continued ; but they grew fainter and fainter, and seemed to take a direction from the river. We now put out our paddles, and plying with all our strength, we pretty soon reached a small cove or creek, the place where we kept our boat and at which we were accustomed to embark. We drew the canoe on shore, and carefully concealed it among the high grass. Then, without taking out our rice-bags, and leaving our shoes in the boat, we ran towards Loosahachee, which we reached without any further adventure.

I was very anxious about Thomas ; but I had scarcely thrown myself upon my bed, before I heard a light tap at the door of my cabin, which I knew to be his. I sprang up and let him in. He was panting for breath and covered with mud. Thomas said, that just as he was going to climb the embankment, he looked behind him, and saw two men rapidly approaching. They seemed to observe him just at the same moment, and called to him to stop. If he had attempted to reach the boat, it would have drawn them that way, and perhaps led to the detection of the whole company. The moment they called to him, he dropped his rice-bag, and stooping as low as he could, he pushed rapidly through the rice in a direction from the river. His pursuers raised a loud shout, and fired their muskets at him,—but without effect. He jumped several cross ditches, made for the high ground, at a distance from the river, and drew off the patrol in that direction. They pursued him closely ; but as he was very strong and active, and well acquainted with the place, he succeeded in escaping from among the ditches and embankments of the rice-field, gained the high grounds, and took a direction towards Loosahachee. But though he had distanced his pursuers, they had still kept upon his track ; and he expected that they would follow him up, and would shortly be arriving.

While Thomas was telling his adventures, he had stripped off his wet clothes, and washed off the mud with which he was covered. I furnished him with a dry suit, which he took with him to his own cabin which was close by mine. I hastened round to the

cabins of our companions and told them what visitors to expect. The barking of all the plantation dogs pretty soon informed us that the patrol was coming. They had roused up the overseer, and with torches in their hands, they entered and searched every cabin in the quarter. But we were prepared for their visit ; we were roused with difficulty out of a deep sleep ; and seemed to be very much astonished at this unseasonable disturbance.

The search proved to be a very useless one ; but as the patrol were certain that they had traced the fugitive to Loosahatchee, the overseer of the plantation upon which we had been depredating, came over the next morning to search out and punish the culprit. He was accompanied by three other men, whom it seems were freeholders of the district, selected with such forms, or rather such neglect of all form, as the laws of Carolina prescribe in such cases. Three Carolina freeholders, selected at hap-hazard, constitute such a court as in most other countries, would hardly be trusted with the final adjudication of any matter above the value of forty shillings at the utmost. But in that part of the world, they not only have the power of judging all charges against slaves, and sentencing the accused to death ; but what the Carolinians doubtless consider a much graver matter—the right of saddling the state treasury with the estimated value of the culprit. This law for refunding to the masters, nominally a part, but what by over-valuation, usually amounts to the entire value, of condemned slaves, deprives the poor wretches of that protection against an unjust sentence, which

otherwise they might find in the pecuniary interest of their masters ; and leaves them without any sort of shield against the prejudice, carelessness or stupidity of their judges. But why should we expect any thing like equity or fairness in the execution of laws which themselves are founded upon the grossest wrong ? It must be confessed, that in this matter the Americans preserve throughout, an admirable consistency.

A table was set out in the passage of the overseer's house ; some glasses and a bottle of whiskey were placed upon it ; and the court proceeded to business. We were all brought up and examined, one after the other. The only witnesses were the patrol who had pursued Thomas ; and they were ordered by the court to pick out the culprits. That was rather a difficult matter. There were between sixty and seventy men of us ; the night had been cloudy and without a moon ; and the patrol had only caught some hasty and uncertain glimpses of the person whom they had followed. The court seemed rather vexed at their hesitation. Yet perhaps it was not very unreasonable ; since they were quite unable to agree together as to what sort a man it was. One thought him short ; the other was certain that he was quite tall. The first, pronounced him a stout, well-set fellow ; the other had taken him to be very slender.

By this time, the first bottle of whiskey was emptied, and a second was put upon the table. The court now told the witnesses that it would not do ; they did not come up to the mark at all ; and if they went on at that rate, the fellow would escape altogether. Just at

this moment, the overseer of the plantation which had been plundered rode up ; and as soon as he had dismounted, he stepped forward to the relief of the witnesses. He said, that while the court was organizing, he had taken the opportunity, to ride over and examine the rice-field, in which the rogue had been started up. It was much trampled in places, and there were a great many foot-prints ; but they were all just alike, and seemed to have been made by the same person. He took a little stick from his pocket, on which he said, he had carefully marked their exact length and breadth.

Now this was a trick for detecting people, which Thomas understood very well ; and he had taken good care to be prepared for it. Our whole company were provided with shoes of the largest size we could get, and all exactly of the same pattern ; so that our tracks had the appearance of being made by a single person, and he a fellow with a very large foot.

This speech of the overseer seemed to revive the drooping hopes of the judges ; and they made us all sit down upon the ground and have our feet measured. There was a man on the plantation named Billy, a harmless, stupid fellow, wholly unconnected with us ; but unluckily for him, the only one of all the slaves whose foot corresponded at all with the measure. The length of this poor fellow's foot was fatal to him. The judges shouted with one voice, and in the style of condemnation to be expected from such a court, that " they would be damned if he was not the thief." It was in vain that the poor fellow denied the charge and

pleaded for mercy. His terror, confusion and surprise, only served to confirm the opinion of his guilt ; and the more he denied, and the louder he pleaded, the more positively his judges were determined against him. Without further ceremony they pronounced him guilty, and sentenced him to be hung !

The sentence was no sooner pronounced than preparations were made for his execution. An empty barrel was brought out, and placed under a tree that stood before the door. The poor fellow was mounted upon it ; the halter was put about his neck, and fastened to a limb over his head. The judges had already become so drunk as to have lost all sense of judicial decorum. One of them kicked away the barrel, and the unhappy victim of Carolina justice dropped struggling into eternity.

The execution over, the slaves were sent into the field ; while Mr Martin, with the judges and witnesses and several others whom the fame of the trial had drawn to Loosahatchee, commenced a regular drunken debauch, which they kept up all that day, and the night following.

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## CHAPTER X.

THE authority of masters over their slaves is in general a continual reign of terror. A base and dastard fear is the sole principle of human nature to which the slave-holder appeals. When it was determined to hang the poor fellow, whose fate I have described in the last chapter, his judges could not know, nor do I suppose, they much cared, whether he were innocent or guilty. Their great object was to terrify the survivors; and by an example of what they would denominate wholesome and necessary severity, to deter from any further trespasses upon the neighboring plantations. In this they succeeded; for though Thomas endeavored to keep up our spirits, we were thoroughly scared, and felt little inclination to second his boldness which seemed to grow more determined, the more obstacles it encountered.

One of our confederates in particular, was so alarmed at the fate of poor Billy, that he seemed to have lost all self control; and we were in constant fear lest he should betray us. When the first paroxysm of his terror was at its height, the evening after he had witnessed the execution, I believe he would gladly have confessed the whole, if he could have found a white man sober enough to listen to him. After a while, he grew more calm; but in the course of the day he had dropped some hints, which were carefully treasured up

by one of the drivers. He reported them as I discovered, to the overseer ; but Mr Martin had not yet recovered from the effects of the frolic ; and he was too drunk and stupid to understand a word that the driver said to him.

We had begun to get the better of our fears, when a new incident happened, which determined us to seek our safety in flight. Some persons, in passing along the river bank, had discovered our canoe, which in the hurry of our flight, we had taken too little care to conceal. It contained not only our bags full of rice,—for we had not yet recovered courage enough to go after them,—but our shoes also, all exactly of the same size, and corresponding with the measure which had been produced upon the trial. Here was ample proof that quite a number had been engaged in the scheme of depredation ; and as one of the company had been traced to Loosahachee, it would be reasonable to look for the others upon the same plantation. Luckily I obtained an early intimation of this discovery, by means of one of the overseer's house-servants, with whom I had the policy to keep up a pretty intimate connection. A man had arrived at the overseer's house, his horse dripping with foam,—and with an appearance of great haste and impatience, he had asked to see the overseer. The moment he came in, the stranger requested to speak with him alone ; and Mr Martin took his guest into another room and locked the door. The girl, who was my spy and informant, under an appearance of the greatest simplicity was artful and intelligent ; and she was prompted to overhear this secret



conversation, as much by her own curiosity, as by the suspicion that it might possibly be something, in which I would take an interest. She contrived to conceal herself in a closet, which was separated from the room in which the overseer and his visitor were conversing, only by a thin partition ; and having overheard his story, the substance of which I have already mentioned,—and learned besides, that the court would hold a new session at Loosahatchee, the day following,—she hastened to inform me of what she had heard. She knew nothing in particular, of our affairs, but she had reason to believe that this piece of news would not be entirely uninteresting to me.

I informed Thomas of what she had told me. We agreed at once, that our best chance of safety was in flight ; and we immediately communicated our intention, and the cause of it, to the rest of our confederates. They were anxious to accompany us ; and we all resolved to be off that very night.

As soon as evening came on, we stole away from the plantation and gained the woods in company. As we anticipated that a very diligent search would be made for us, we thought it best to separate. Thomas and myself resolved to keep together ; the others scattered and took various directions. As long as the darkness lasted, we traveled on as rapidly as we could. When the morning began to appear, we plunged into a thick swampy piece of woods, and having broken down some branches and young trees, we made as dry a bed as we were able and lay down to sleep. We were much fatigued with our long and rapid journey,

and slept soundly. It was past noon when we waked. Our appetites were sharp, but we had no provisions. Just as we were beginning to consider what course it would be best for us to pursue, we heard the distant bay-  
ing of a hound. Thomas listened for a moment, and then exclaimed that he knew that cry. It was a famous dog, a cross of the blood-hound, which Mr Martin had long had in training, and upon whose performances in tracking out run-aways he very much prided himself. The place where we were, was a thick swamp, in which it was difficult to move, and not easy to stand. To cross it would be impossible; and we resolved to get into the edge of it, where the ground was harder, and the undergrowth thinner, and to continue our flight. We did so,—but the hound gained rapidly upon us, and his baying sounded louder and louder. Thomas drew a stout sharp knife, which he carried in his pocket. We were now just at the border where the dry ground came down upon the swamp, and looking behind us, across the level and open woods, we could see the hound coming on with his nose to the ground, and uttering at intervals a deep and savage cry. Farther behind, but still in full view, we saw a man on horseback, whom we took to be Mr Martin himself.

The dog was evidently upon our track ; and following it to the place where we had first plunged into the swamp, he disappeared from our view. But we could still hear his clamor, which grew louder and almost constant ; and we soon perceived by the rustling and cracking of the underwood that he was close upon us.

At this moment we faced about and stood at bay ;— Thomas in front, with his knife in hand, and I just behind, with a sharp and heavy lightwood knot, the best indeed the only weapon, of which I could avail myself. Presently the dog emerged from the swamp. The moment he saw us, he redoubled his cry, and dashed forward foaming and open-mouthed. He made a great leap directly at Thomas' throat, but only succeeded in seizing his left arm, which Thomas raised as a shield against the dog's attack. At the same instant he dealt a stroke with his knife, which penetrated to the hilt, and both dog and man came struggling to the ground. How the contest would have ended had Thomas been alone, is very doubtful ; for though the hound had already received several wounds, they only seemed to increase his ferocity, and he still struggled to get at the throat of his antagonist. My lightwood knot now did good service ;—two or three heavy blows upon the dog's head laid him senseless and sprawling on the ground.

While we had been awaiting the dog's attack, and during the contest, we had scarcely thought of his master ; but looking up, after it was over, we discovered that Mr Martin was already very near us. When the dog took to the swamp, his master had followed along upon its edge, and came suddenly upon us before we had expected him. He pointed his gun and called upon us to surrender. Thomas no sooner saw the overseer, than he seemed to lose all his self-control, and grasping his knife, he rushed directly upon him. Mr Martin fired ;—but the buck-shot rattled

harmlessly among the trees, and as he was attempting to wheel his horse, Thomas dashed upon him, seized him by the arm, and dragged him to the ground. The horse ran frightened through the woods ; and it was in vain that I attempted to stop him. We looked round in expectation of seeing some others of the huntsmen coming up. None were in sight ; and we seized the opportunity to retreat, and to carry our prisoner into the covert of the swamp.

We learned from him, that by the time the court and their attendants arrived at Loosahachee, our flight had been discovered, and that it was immediately resolved to raise the neighborhood, and to commence a general search for the run-aways. All the horses, dogs and men that could be come at, were put into requisition. They were divided into parties, and immediately commenced beating through the woods and swamps in the neighborhood.

A party of five or six men, with Mr Martin and his blood-hound, had traced three of our companions into a thick swamp, just on the bank of a river. The pursuers dismounted, and with their guns in their hands, they followed the dog into the thicket. Our poor fellows were so overcome with fatigue, that they slept till the very moment that the hound sprang in upon them. He seized one of them by the throat and held him to the ground. The others ran ; and as they ran, the pursuers fired. One of the fugitives fell dead, horribly mangled and cut to pieces with buck-shot ; the other still continued his flight. As soon as the dog could be compelled to quit his hold of the man he had

seized,—which was not without difficulty and delay—he was put upon the track of the surviving fugitive. He followed it to the river, where he stood at fault. The man had probably plunged in, and swam to the other side ; but as the dog could not be made to take the water, and as the swamp on the opposite bank was reputed to be very soft and dangerous, no further pursuit was made ; the chase in that direction was given up, and the poor fellow was suffered to escape for the present.

The pursuers now separated. Two of them undertook to carry back to Loosahachee the captive they had taken, and the other three, with Mr Martin and his hound, were to continue the hunt in search of the rest of us. They learned from their captive the place at which we had parted company, and the direction which the several parties had taken. After beating about for some time, the hound struck upon our trail, and opened in full cry ; but the horses of Mr Martin's companions were so broken down, that when he began to spur on to keep up with the hound, he soon left them far behind. Mr Martin ended his story by advising us to go in and surrender ourselves ; giving us his word and honor as a gentleman and an overseer, that if we would offer him no further violence or injury, he would protect us from punishment, and reward us most handsomely.

The sun was now setting. The short twilight which follows a Carolina sunset would soon be succeeded by the darkness of a cloudy and moonless night ; and we felt but little apprehension of being im-

mediately troubled by our pursuers. I looked at Thomas, as if to inquire what we had better do. He drew me aside,—having first examined the fastenings of our prisoner, whom we had bound to a tree, by some cords found in his own pocket, and which were doubtless intended for a very different purpose.

Thomas paused for a moment, as if to collect his thoughts; then pointing to Mr Martin, “Archy,” he said, “that man dies to-night.”

There was a wild energy, and at the same time, a steady coolness, in the tone in which he spoke. It startled me; at first I made no answer; and as meanwhile I looked Thomas in the face, I saw there an expression of stern exultation, and a fixedness of purpose not to be shaken. His eyes flashed fire, as he repeated,—but in a low and quiet tone that contrasted strangely with the matter of his speech—“I tell you Archy, that man dies to-night. She commands it; I have promised it; and now the time is come.”

“Who commands it?” I hastily inquired.

“Do you ask who? Archy, that man was the murderer of my wife.”

Though Thomas and I had lived in great intimacy, this was almost the first time, since the death of his wife, that he had mentioned her to me in such plain terms. He had, it is true, now and then made some distant allusions to her; and I recollected that on several occasions before, he had dropped some strange and incoherent hints about an intercourse which he still kept up with her.

The mention of his wife, brought tears into his

eyes ;—but with his hand, he wiped them hastily away, and soon recovering his former air of calm and steady determination, he again repeated, in the same low but resolute tone, “ Archy, I tell you that man dies to-night.”

When I called to mind all the circumstances that had attended the death of Thomas’ wife, I could not but acknowledge that Mr Martin had been her murderer. I had sympathised with Thomas then, and I sympathised with him now. The murderer was in his power ; he believed himself called upon to execute justice upon him ; and I could not but acknowledge that his death would be an act of righteous retribution.

Still, I felt a sort of instinctive horror at the idea of shedding blood ; and perhaps too, there still crept about my heart some remains of that slavish fear and servile timidity, which the bolder spirit of Thomas had wholly shaken off. I acknowledged that the life of the overseer was justly forfeited ;—but at the same time, I reminded Thomas that Mr Martin had promised, if we would carry him home in safety, to procure our pardon and protect us from punishment.

A scornful smile played about the lip of my comrade while I was speaking. “ Yes Archy,” he answered, “ pardon and protection !—and a hundred lashes, and a hanging the next day perhaps. No ! boy, I want no such pardon ; I want no pardon such as they will give. I have been a slave too long, already. I am now free ; and when they take me, they are welcome to take my life. Besides, we cannot trust him ;

—if we wished it, we cannot trust him. You know we cannot. They do not think themselves obliged to keep any promises they make us. They will promise any thing to get us in their power ; and then, their promises are worthless as rotten straw. My promises are not like theirs ; and have I not told you that I have promised it ? Yes, I have sworn it ; and I now say, once for all, that man must die to-night.”

There was an energy and a determination, in his tone and manner, which overpowered me. I could resist it no longer, and I bade him do his pleasure. He loaded the gun, which we had taken from Mr Martin, and which he had held in his hand all the time we had been talking. This done, we returned to the overseer, who was sitting at the foot of the tree to which we had bound him. He looked up anxiously at us, as we approached, and inquired if we had determined to go in ?

“ We have determined,” answered Thomas. “ We allow you half an hour to prepare for death. Make the most of it. You have many sins to repent of, and the time is short.”

It is impossible to describe the look of mingled terror, amazement and incredulity, with which the overseer heard these words. One moment, with a voice of authority, he bade us untie him ; the next, he forced a laugh and affected to treat what Thomas had said, as a mere jest ; then, yielding to his fears, he wept like a child, and cried and begged for mercy.

“ Have you shown it ?” answered Thomas. “ Did



you show it to my poor wife ? You murdered her ; and for her life you must answer with your own."

Mr Martin called God to witness, that he was not guilty of this charge. He had punished Thomas' wife, he confessed ; but he only did what his duty as an overseer demanded ; and it was impossible, he said, that the few cuts he gave her, could have caused her death.

"The few cuts !" cried Thomas. "Thank God, Mr Martin that we do not torture you as you tortured her ! Speak no more, or you will but aggravate your sufferings. Confess your crimes ! Say your prayers ! Do not spend your last moments in adding falsehood to murder !"

The overseer cowered beneath this energetic reproof. He covered his face with his hands, bent down his head, and passed a few moments in a silence which was only interrupted by an inarticulate sobbing. Perhaps, he was trying to prepare himself to die. But life was too sweet to be surrendered without another effort to save it. He saw that it was useless to appeal to Thomas ; but rousing himself once more, he turned to me. He begged me to remember the confidence, he had once placed in me, and the favors, which as he said, he had shown me. He promised to purchase us both, and give us our liberty, any thing, every thing, if we would only spare his life !

His tears and piteous lamentations moved me. My head grew dizzy, and I felt such a faintness and heart-sinking, that I was obliged to support myself against a tree. Thomas stood by, with his arms folded and

resting on the gun. He made no answer to the reiterated prayers and promises of the overseer. Indeed he did not seem to notice them. His eyes were fixed and he was lost in thought.

After a considerable interval, during all which the unhappy overseer continued to repeat his prayers and lamentations, Thomas roused himself. He stepped back a few paces, and raised the gun. "The half hour is out," he said ;—"Mr Martin are you ready?"

"No ! oh no ! Spare me, spare me !—one half hour longer—I have much—"

He did not live to finish the sentence. The gun flashed ; the ball penetrated his brain, and he fell dead without a struggle.

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## CHAPTER XI.

WE scraped a shallow grave, in which we placed the body of the overseer. We dragged the dead hound to the same spot, and laid him with his master. They were fit companions.

We now resumed our flight,—not assome may perhaps suppose, with the frightened and conscience-stricken haste of murderers, but with that lofty feel-

ing of manhood vindicated, and tyranny visited with a just retribution, which animated the soul of the Israelitish hero whilst he fled for refuge into the country of the Midianites ; and which burned in the bosoms of Wallace and of Tell, as they pursued their midnight flight among the friendly cliffs and freedom-breathing summits of their native mountains.

There were no mountains to receive and shelter us. But still we fled through the swamps and barrens of Carolina, resolved to put, as soon as possible, some good miles between us and the neighborhood of Loo-sahachee. It was more than twenty-four hours since we had tasted food ; yet such was the excitement of our minds that we did not faint, and were hardly sensible of weakness or fatigue.

We kept a northwesterly direction, steering our course by the stars, and we must have made a good distance ; for we did not once stop to rest, but pushed forward at a very rapid pace all night. Our way lay through the open piney woods, through which we could travel almost as fast as on a road. Sometimes a swamp or the appearances of a plantation, would compel us to deviate from our track, but as soon as we could, we resumed our original direction.

The darkness of the night, which for the last hour or two that it lasted, had been increased by a foggy mist, was just beginning to yield to the first indistinct grey dawn of the morning. We were passing along a little depression in the level of the pine barrens,—now dry, but in the wet season, probably the bed of a temporary stream,—looking for a place in which to

conceal ourselves, when we suddenly came upon a man, lying, as it seemed asleep, in the midst of a clump of bushes, with his head resting on a bag of corn. We recognized him at once. He was a slave belonging to a plantation next adjoining Loosa-hachee, with whom we had had some slight acquaintance, but who, as we were informed, had been a runaway, for some two or three months past. Thomas shook him by the shoulder, and he wakened in a terrible fright. We told him not to be alarmed, for we were run-aways like himself, and very much in need of his assistance, being half dead with hunger, and in a country with which we were totally unacquainted. At first the man appeared very reserved and suspicious. He feared it seemed, lest we might be decoys, sent out on purpose to entrap him. At last however, we succeeded in dissipating his doubts; and no sooner was he satisfied with the account we gave of ourselves, than he bade us follow him, and we should presently have food.

With his bag of corn upon his shoulder he pursued the shallow ravine in which we had found him, for a mile or more, till at length it widened into what seemed a large swamp, or rather a pond grown up with trees. We now left the ravine and followed along on the edge of the pond for some distance, when presently our guide began wading in the water and called to us to follow him. We plunged in; but before going far, he laid down his bag of corn upon a fallen tree, and going back, he carefully effaced the marks which our footsteps had made upon the muddy edge of the

pond. He now led us forward through mud and water up to our waists, for near half a mile. The gigantic trees among which we were wading, sprung up like columns, from the surface of the water, with round, straight, whitish-colored, branchless trunks, their leafy tops, forming a thick canopy over head. There was scarcely any undergrowth, except a species of enormous vines, which ran twining like great cables about the bodies of the trees, and reaching to the very tops, helped with their foliage to thicken the canopy above us. So effectually was the light excluded, and so close did the trunks of the trees stand together, that one could see but a very little way into this watery forest.

The water began to grow deeper, and the wood more gloomy ; and we were wondering whither our guide was leading us, when presently we came to a little island which rose a few feet from the surface of the water, so regular and mound-like, that it had quite the appearance of an artificial structure. Perhaps it was the work of the ancient inhabitants of the country, and the site of one of their forts or fastnesses. It was about an acre in extent, and was covered with a thick growth of trees, quite different however, from those of the lake by which it was surrounded, and much inferior in size and majesty. Its edges were bordered by low shrubs and bushes, whose abundant foliage gave the islet the appearance of a mass of green. Our guide pointed out to us a little opening in the bushes, through which we ascended ; and after having gained the dry land, he led us through the thicket along a narrow and

winding path, till presently we came to a rude cabin built of bark and branches. He gave a peculiar whistle, which was answered ; and two or three men immediately made their appearance.

They seemed a good deal surprised at seeing us, and me especially, whom apparently they took for a free man. But our guide assured them that we were friends and fellow-sufferers, and led the way into the cabin. Our new hosts received us kindly ; and having heard how long we had been without food, before asking us any further questions, they hastened to satisfy our hunger. They produced beef and hominy in abundance, on which we feasted to our heart's content.

We were then called upon to give an account of ourselves. Accordingly we made a relation of our adventures,—omitting however, any mention of the fate of the overseer ; and as our guide, who knew us, could confirm a part of our story, our account was pronounced satisfactory, and we were presently admitted to the privilege of joining their fraternity.

There were six of them, besides ourselves ;—all brave fellows, who weary of daily task-work and the tyranny of overseers, had taken to the woods, and had succeeded in regaining a savage and stealthy freedom, which, with all its hardships and dangers, was a thousand times to be preferred to the forced labor and wretched servitude from which they had escaped. Our guide was the only one of them whom we had ever seen till now. The leader of the band had fled from his master's plantation in the neighborhood, with a single companion, some two or three years before.

They did not then know of the existence of this retreat ; but being sharply pursued, they had attempted to cross the pond or swamp, by which it was surrounded,—a thing, I suppose, which had never been done before. In this attempt they were fortunate enough to light upon the islet, which being unknown to any one else, had ever since served them as a secure retreat. They soon picked up a recruit or two ; and had afterwards been joined by their other companions.

Our guide, it seems, had been to a neighboring plantation to trade for corn ;—a traffic, which our friends carried on with the slaves of several of the nearest plantations. After the business was concluded, the men with whom he had been dealing, had produced a bottle of whiskey of which our guide had drank so freely, that he had not gone far on his way home, before his legs failed him. He sunk down in the place where we had found him, and fell fast asleep.

Drinking whiskey away from home, according to the prudent laws of this swamp-encircled commonwealth, was a high misdemeanor, punishable with thirty-nine lashes, which were forthwith inflicted upon our guide with a good deal of emphasis. He took it in good part though, as being the execution of a law to which he had himself assented, and which he knew was enacted as much for his own benefit, as for the benefit of those who had just now carried it into execution.

The life upon which we now entered had, at least, the charm of novelty. In the day time we eat, slept,

told stories and recounted our escapes ; or employed ourselves in dressing skins, making clothes, and curing provisions. But the night was our season of adventure and enterprize. As the autumn was coming on, we made frequent visits to the neighboring corn fields and potato patches, which we felt no scruples whatever in laying under severe contribution. This however was only for a month or two. Our regular and certain supply was in the herds of half wild cattle, which wander through the piney woods and feed upon the coarse grass which they furnish. We killed as many of these cattle as we needed, and their flesh cut into long strips, we dried in the sun. Thus cured, it is a palatable food ; and we not only kept a stock on hand for our own consumption, but it furnished the principle article of a constant but cautious traffic which, as I have already mentioned, we carried on with the slaves of several neighboring plantations.

This wild life of the woods has its privations and its sufferings ; but it has too, its charms and its pleasures ; and in its very worst aspect, it is a thousand and ten thousand times to be preferred to that mis-called civilization which degrades the noble savage into a cringing and broken spirited slave ;—a civilization, which purchases the indolence and luxury of a single master, with the sighs and tears, the forced and unwilling labor, the degradation, misery and despair of an hundred of his fellow men ! Yes—there is more of true manhood in the bold bosom of a single outlaw than in a whole nation of cowardly tyrants and crouching slaves !



## CHAPTER XII.

By the end of the winter, the herds of cattle which were accustomed to frequent our neighborhood were a good deal thinned ; and the pasturage had now become so bare and withered, that what remained of them were little better than walking skeletons, and in fact, scarcely worth the trouble of killing.

Moreover, the overseers of the neighboring plantations, were beginning to be very well aware that they were exposed to some pretty regular and diligent depredators. We learned from the slaves with whom we trafficed, that there was a good deal of talk about the rapid disappearance of the cattle ; and that preparations were making for a grand hunt in search of the plunderers.

With the double object of disappointing these preparations, and of getting among some fresh herds of cattle, it was resolved that five of us should make an excursion to a considerable distance, while the other two remained at home and kept close.

One of our number undertook to lead us into the neighborhood of a plantation beyond the Santee, on which he had been raised. He knew all the country about it perfectly well. There were several good hiding places he said, in which we could conceal ourselves in the day time ; and the extensive woods and wastes furnished a good range and abundance of cattle.

We set off under his guidance, and kept on for several days, or nights rather, in a northwardly direction. On the fifth or sixth evening of our journey, we started soon after sun-set, and having traveled till a little past midnight, through a country of abrupt and barren sand-hills, our guide told us that we were now in the neighborhood into which he intended to carry us. But as the moon had gone down, and it was cloudy and quite dark, he was rather uncertain as to the precise place we were at; and we should do best, he said, to camp where we were, till day-light, when he would lead us to some better place of concealment.

This advice was very acceptable;—for by this time, we were way-worn, tired and sleepy. We kindled a fire, cooked the last of the provisions we had brought with us, and having appointed one of our number to keep watch, the rest of us lay down and were soon fast asleep.

I, at least, was sleeping soundly, and dreaming of poor Cassy and our infant child, when my dream was interrupted, and I was roused from my slumbers, by what seemed a discharge of fire-arms and a galloping of horses. I sprang upon my feet, hardly knowing whether I was awake. At the same moment, my eye fell upon Thomas, who had been sleeping beside me, and I perceived that his clothes were all stained with blood. He had already gained his feet; and without stopping to hear or see any thing further, we sprung together into the nearest thicket, and fled for some time, we scarcely knew where or why. At last, Thomas cried out that he could go no further. The

bleeding of his wounds had weakened him much, and they were now growing stiff and painful. The morning was just beginning to dawn. We sat down upon the ground and endeavored to bind up his wounds the best we were able. A ball or buck-shot had passed through the fleshy part of his left arm, between the shoulder and elbow. Another shot had struck him in the side,—but as far as we could judge, had glanced on one of his ribs and so passed off without doing any mortal injury. These wounds had bled profusely and were now very painful. We bound them up the best we could ; and looking round we found a little stream of water with which to wash away the blood, and quench our thirst.

Thus recruited and refreshed, we began to consider which way we should turn and what we were to do. We did not dare to go back to the camp where we had slept ; indeed we were very doubtful whether we were able to do so ; for the morning had been dark, and we had fled with heedless haste, taking very little note of our direction. Our island retreat was at the distance of some seven or eight days journey ; and as we had traveled in the night, and not always in precisely the same direction, it would be no very easy matter to find our way back again. However, Thomas prided himself upon his woodmanship, and though he had not observed the course of our journey quite so closely as he could have wished, he still thought that he might succeed in finding the way back.

But his wounds were too recent, and he felt too weak, to think of starting off immediately. Besides it

was already broad day-light ; and we had the best of reasons for traveling only by night. So we sought out a thicket in which we concealed ourselves till night-fall.

As the evening came on, Thomas declared that he felt much better and stronger ; and we resolved to set out at once, on our return. In the first place however, we determined to make an attempt to find the camp of the preceding night, in hopes that some of our companions might have escaped as well as ourselves, and that by some good luck, we might chance to fall in with them.

After wandering about for some time, at length we found the camp. Two dead bodies, stiff and bloody, lay by the extinguished embers of the fire. They seemed to have been shot dead as they slept, and scarcely to have moved a limb. The bushes about were stained and spattered with blood ; and by the moon-light, we tracked the bloody flight of one of our luckless companions for a considerable distance. This must have been our sentinel, who had probably dropped asleep, and thus exposed us to be surprised.

Perhaps he might be lurking some where in the bushes, wounded and helpless. This thought emboldened us. We shouted and called aloud. But our voices echoed through the woods, and died away unanswered. We returned again to the camp, and gazed once more upon the distorted faces of our dead companions. We could not bare to leave them unburied. I hastily scraped a shallow trench, and there we placed them. We dropped a tear upon their grave, and sad,

dismayed, dejected, we set out upon our long, weary and uncertain journey.

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#### CHAPTER XIII.

We traveled slowly all that night, and soon after the morning dawn, we concealed ourselves again, and laid down to sleep. 'Thomas' wounds were much better, and seemed disposed to heal. The hurt in his side was far less dangerous than we had at first supposed, and as the pain had subsided, he was now able to sleep.

We slept well enough, but awoke weak and faint for want of food ; for it was now some twenty-four hours since we had tasted any. The sun was not yet down ; yet we resolved to set out immediately, in hopes that day-light might point out to us something with which to satisfy our hunger.

After traveling a considerable distance through the woods, just as the sun was setting, we struck into a road. This road we determined to follow, in hopes that it might presently lead us into the neighborhood of some farm-house near which we might light upon something eatable. It was an unlucky resolve ; for we had

not gone above half a mile, when just upon the crest of a short hill, we suddenly came upon three travelers on horseback, whom the undulations of the road had concealed from us, till we were within a few yards of each other.

Both parties were mutually surprised. The travelers reined up their horses and eyed us sharply. Our appearance might well attract attention. Our clothes,—such as we had,—were torn and ragged. Instead of shoes, we wore a kind of high moccasins, made of untanned ox-hide ; we had caps of the same material ; and the dresses of both of us, especially of Thomas, were spattered and stained with blood.

They took me for a free man, and one of them called out “ Hallo, stranger, who are you and where are you going ?—and whose fellow is that you have along ?”

I did my best to take advantage of my color, and to seem what they took me for. But this I soon found would not avail ; for though at first, they did not seem to entertain a suspicion that I was a slave, yet our appearance was so strange, that they questioned me very closely. As I had no very definite idea where we were, and was totally unacquainted with the neighborhood, I was not at all able to hit upon appropriate answers to the numerous questions they put me ; and my statements soon grew confused and contradictory. This served to excite their suspicions ; and while I was attending to the questions of the one who acted as chief spokesman, another of the company suddenly sprang from his horse, and seizing me by the

collar, swore that I was either a run-away or a negro-stealer. The other two jumped down in a moment; and while one of them caught me by the arm, the other attempted to seize Thomas.

He eluded this attempt and turned to run. He had gone but a little distance, when looking back and seeing me on the ground, he forgot at once, his wounds, his weakness and his own danger. He grasped his staff, and rushed to my rescue. They had throttled me till I was powerless and almost insensible; and while one of them still held me to the ground, the other stood up to meet Thomas, who as he turned short about, had struck his pursuer to the earth, and now came on to my relief, with his staff uplifted. His new antagonist was both strong and active. He succeeded in avoiding the stroke of Thomas' cudgel, and immediately closed with him. Thomas had but little use of one arm; and his strength was much reduced by loss of blood and long fasting; but he struggled hard and was already getting the upper hand, when the fellow whom he had knocked down at the commencement of the fight, regained his senses, and came to the assistance of his companion. Both together, they were too much for him; and they soon got him down and bound his hands. They did the same with me; and one of them having produced a piece of rope from his saddle-bags, they made halters of it, which they put about our necks and by the application of their whips, they compelled us to keep up with their horses.

In about half an hour, we came to a mean and forlorn-looking cabin, by the road-side. It appeared to be

a sort of inn, or tavern ; and here we were to lodge. The only persons about the house seemed to be the landlady herself and a little daughter some ten or twelve years old. The whole appearance of the place bore evident marks of discomfort and poverty. Our captors had no sooner provided for their horses, than they called for chains ;—trace-chains they said, or in fact any thing in the shape of a chain, would answer their purpose. But much to their disappointment, the landlady declared that she had nothing of the sort. However she procured some old rope ; and having secured us as effectually as they could, they made us sit down in the passage.

The landlady told them, that in all probability, we were run-aways ; for the neighborhood had lately been much troubled by them. A company of five or six men, she said, had gone out two or three nights since on purpose to hunt up the rascals, and had unexpectedly come upon quite a party, asleep in the woods around a fire.

The gang seemed too large to be easily taken, but it was resolved that the fellows should not escape ; especially as the man whose slaves they were supposed to be, and who was one of the party, openly declared that he had rather they were all shot, than to have them wandering about the country useless to him and mischievous to his neighbors.

The company separated and each man approached from a different point. Upon a given signal, all fired ; and then putting spurs to their horses, they rode off and returned home each by himself. Nobody had



stopped to see what execution was done ; but as the men were all good shots, it was supposed that most of the run-aways were either killed or desperately wounded ; and as our clothes were bloody, and one of us was hurt, she thought it likely, she said, that we belonged to that same gang.

It appeared in the course of the conversation between the landlady and her guests, that the murderous kind of attack to which our companions had fallen victims, but which had been intended for another party of run-aways, is an operation occasionally practised in lower Carolina, when a party of slave-hunters falls in with a gang of fugitive slaves too large to be easily arrested.

The dispersion of the attacking party, and each one shooting and returning by himself is only the effect of an ancient and traditionary prejudice. By the law of Carolina, the killing a slave is regarded as murder ; and though probably, this law was never enforced, and would doubtless be created by a jury of modern slaveholders, as an old-fashioned and fanatical absurdity, there still lingers, in the breasts of the people, some remains of horror at the idea of deliberate bloodshed, and a sort of superstitious apprehension of the possible enforcement of this antiquated law. To blind-fold their own consciences, and to avoid the possibility of a judicial investigation, each man of an attacking party takes care to see none of the others when they fire ; and no one goes to the place to ascertain how many have been killed or disabled. The poor wretches who are not so fortunate as to be shot dead upon the spot, are left to

the lingering torments of thirst, fever, starvation and festering wounds ; and when at length they die, their skeletons lie bleaching in the Carolina sun, proud proofs of slave-holding civilization and humanity.

While our captors were at supper, the little girl, the landlady's daughter, came to look at us, as we lay in the passage. She was a pretty child, and her soft blue eyes filled with tears as she looked upon us. I asked her for a little water. She hastened to get it for us ; and inquired if we did not want something to eat. I told her that we were half dead with hunger ; and she no sooner heard it, than she hastened away and soon returned with a large cake of bread.

Our arms were bound so tight that we were utterly helpless, and the little girl broke the bread and fed us with her own hand.

Is not this one instance enough to prove that nature never intended man to be a tyrant ? Avarice, a blind lust of domination, the false but specious suggestions of ignorance and passion combine to make him so ; and pity at length, is banished from his soul. It then seeks refuge in the woman's heart ; and when the progress of oppression drives it even thence, as sad and hesitating, it prepares to wing its way to heaven, still it lurks and lingers in the bosom of the child !

By listening closely to the conversation of the travelers,—for by this time the landlady had produced a jug of whiskey, and they had become very communicative,—we learned that we were within a few miles of the town of Camden, and on the great northern road leading from that town into North Carolina. Our

captors it seemed, were from the upper-country. They had not passed through Camden, but had struck into this road very near the place where they met us. They were traveling into Virginia to purchase slaves.

After discussing the question at considerable length, they concluded to delay their journey for a day or two, and to take us to Camden, in hopes to find our owner and obtain a reward for apprehending us ; or if nobody should claim us immediately, they could lodge us in jail, advertise us in the newspapers, and give further attention to the business upon their return.

By this time, the whiskey jug was emptied, and the travelers made preparations for sleeping. There were but two rooms in the house. The landlady and her daughter had one ; and some beds were prepared for the guests, in the other. We were carried into their room ; and after again lamenting that the landlady could not furnish them with chains, they carefully examined and retightened the ropes with which we were bound, and then undressed and threw themselves upon their beds. They were probably fatigued with their journey, and the whiskey increased their drowsy inclination ; so that before long, they all gave evident tokens of being in a sound slumber.

I envied them this happiness ; for the tightness of my bonds, and the uneasy position in which I was obliged to lie, prevented me from sleeping. The moonbeams shone in at the window, and made every object distinctly visible. Thomas and myself were lamenting in whispers, our wretched condition, and consulting hopelessly together, when we saw the door of the room

cautiously and silently opening. In a moment, the landlady's little daughter made her appearance. She came towards us with noiseless steps, and one hand raised, as if motioning to us to be silent. In the other, she held a knife ; and stooping down she hastily cut the cords by which we were bound.

We did not dare to speak ; but our hearts beat hard, and I am sure our looks expressed the gratitude we felt. We gained our feet with as little noise as possible, and were stealing towards the door, when a new thought struck Thomas. He laid his hand upon my shoulder to draw my attention, and then began to pick up the coat, shoes, and other clothes of one of our captors. At once I understood his intention, and imitated his example. The little girl seemed astonished and displeased at this proceeding, and motioned to us to desist. But without seeming to understand her gestures, we gained the door with the clothes in our hands ; and passing out of the passage, we walked slowly and cautiously for some distance, taking good heed, lest the sound of our footsteps might give an alarm. In the mean time, the little girl patted the house dog on the head, and kept him quiet. When we had gained a sufficient distance we started upon a run, which we did not give over till we were fairly out of breath.

As soon as we had recovered ourselves a little, we stripped off our ragged dresses, and hid them in the bushes. Luckily the clothes which we had brought off in our flight, fitted us very tolerably, and gave us a

much more respectable and less suspicious appearance. We now went on, for two or three miles till we came to a road that crossed the one upon which we were traveling, and ran off towards the south.

In all this time, Thomas had said nothing ; nor did he scarcely seem to notice my remarks, or to hear the questions, which, from time to time, I put to him. When we came to the cross-road, he suddenly stopped, and took me by the arm. I supposed that he was going to consult with me, as to the course which we should take ; and great was my surprise to hear him say, " Archy, here I leave you."

I could not imagine what he intended, and I looked at him for an explanation.

" You are now," he said, " on the road to the north. You have good clothes, and as much learning as an overseer. You can readily pass for a free man. It will be very easy to get away to those free states of which I have heard you speak so often. If I go with you, we shall both be stopped and questioned. We shall be pursued ; and if we keep together, and follow this road, we shall certainly be taken. It is a great way to the free states, and I have little chance and no hope of ever getting there ; and if I did, what should I gain by it ? I will try the woods again and do as I can. I shall be able to get back to our old place ; —but you, Archy, you can do better. You are sure of getting away to the north. Go, my boy, go, and God bless you."

I was deeply moved ; and it was some time before I was able to reply. The thoughts of escaping from my

present situation of danger and misery, to a land where I could bear the name, and enjoy the rights of a free-man, flashed upon my mind with a radiant and dazzling brightness that seemed almost to blot out every other feeling. Yet still my love for Thomas, and the gratitude I owed him, glimmered through these new hopes; and a low voice from the very centre of my heart bade me not to desert my friend. After too long a pause, and too much hesitation, I began to answer him. I spoke of his wounds; of our sworn friendship; and of the risk he so lately run in my behalf; and insisted that I would stay with him to the last.

I spoke, I fear, with too little of zeal and earnestness. At least, all that I said, only seemed to confirm Thomas in his determination. He replied that his wounds were healing; and that he was already almost as strong as ever. He added, that if I stayed with him, I might do myself much harm without the chance of doing him any good. He pointed along the road, and in an energetic and commanding voice, he bade me follow it, while he should take the cross-road towards the south.

When Thomas had once made up his mind, there was a firmness in the tone with which he spoke, sufficient often to overawe the most unwilling. At the present moment, I was but too ready to be prevailed upon. He saw his advantage and pursued it. "Go Archy," he repeated, "go;—if not for your own sake, go for mine! If you stay with me, and are taken, I shall never forgive you for it."

Little by little, my better feelings yielded; and at

last I consented to the separation. I took Thomas by the hand, and pressed him to my heart. A nobler spirit never breathed ;—I was not worthy to call myself his friend.

“ God bless you, Archy,” he said, as he left me. I stood watching him as he walked rapidly away ; and as I looked, I was ready to sink into the earth with shame and mortification. Once or twice, I was just starting to follow him ; but selfish prudence prevailed, and I held back. I watched him till he was out of sight, and then resumed my journey. It was a base desertion, which not even the love of liberty could excuse.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

I walked on as fast as I was able, till after day-light, without meeting a single individual, or passing more than two or three mean and lonely houses. Just as the sun was rising, I gained the top of a considerable hill. Here there was a small house by the road side, and a horse saddled and bridled was tied to a tree near by. The animal was sleek and in good condition ; and from the cut of the saddle-bags I took him to belong

to some doctor, who had come thus early to visit a patient. It was a tempting opportunity. I looked cautiously this way and that, and seeing nobody, I unfastened the horse, and jumped into the saddle. I walked him a little distance, but presently put him into a gallop, that soon carried me out of sight of the house.

This was a very lucky acquisition ; for as I was upon the same road, which the travelers from whom I had escaped would follow as soon as they resumed their journey, I was in manifest danger of being overtaken and recognized. As I found that my horse had both spirit and bottom, I put him to his speed, and went forward at a rapid rate. My good luck did not end here ; for happening to put my hand into the pocket of my new coat, I drew out a pocket-book, which beside a parcel of musty papers, I found on examining it a little, to contain quite a pretty sum of money in bank notes. This discovery gave a new impulse to my spirits, which were high enough before ; and I pushed on all day without stopping, except now and then to rest my horse in the shade of a tree.

Towards evening I got a supper and corn for my horse at a little hedge tavern ; and waiting till the moon rose, I set out again. By morning, my horse was completely broken down and gave out entirely. Thankful for his services thus far,—for according to my reckoning he had carried me upwards of a hundred miles in the twenty-four hours,—I stripped off his saddle and bridle and turned him into a corn-field to refresh himself. I now pursued my journey on foot ; for I feared if I kept the horse, the possession of him



might perhaps get me into difficulty ; and in fact, he was so jaded and worn out that he would be of very little use to me. I had got a good start upon the travelers, and I did not doubt that I could get on as fast upon foot, as they would on horseback.

Before sunset, I arrived at a considerable village. Here I indulged myself in a hearty meal, and a good night's sleep. Both were needed ; for what with watching, fasting, and fatigue, I was quite worn out. I slept some ten hours and awoke with new vigor. I now resumed my journey which I pursued without much fear of interruption ; though I judged it prudent to stop but seldom, and to push forward as rapidly as possible. I kept on through North Carolina and Virginia ; crossed the Potomac into Maryland ; and avoiding Baltimore, I passed on into Pennsylvania, and congratulated myself that at last I trod a soil, cultivated by freemen.

I had gone but a very few miles, before I perceived the difference. In fact, I had scarcely passed the slave-holding border, before the change became apparent. The spring was just opening, and every thing was beginning to look fresh, green, and beautiful. The nicely cultivated fields, the numerous small enclosures, the neat and substantial farm-houses, thickly scattered along the way, the pretty villages and busy towns, the very roads themselves, which were covered with wagons and travelers,—all these signs of universal thrift and comfort, gave abundant evidence that at length I saw a country where labor was honorable and where every one labored for himself. It was an exhilarating

and delightful prospect, and in strong contrast with all I had seen in the former part of my journey, in which a wretched and lonely road had led me on through a vast monotonous extent of unprofitable woods, deserted fields grown up with broomsedge and mullen, or fields just ready to be deserted, gullied, barren and with all the evidences upon them of a negligent, unwilling and unthrifty cultivation. Here and there I had passed a mean and comfortless house ; and once in fifty miles, a decaying, poverty-stricken village, with a court house, and a store or two, and a great crowd of idlers collected about a tavern door ; but without one single sign of industry or improvement.

I was desirous of seeing Philadelphia ; but that city, so near the slave-holding border, I feared might be infected with something of the slave-holding spirit ; for the worst plagues are the most apt to be contagious. I passed by, without passing through it, and hastened on to New York. I crossed the noble Hudson and entered the town. It was the first city I had ever seen ; at least, the first one worthy to be called a city ; and when I beheld the spacious harbor crowded with shipping ; the long lines of ware-houses, the numerous streets, the splendid shops, and the swarming crowds of busy people, I was astonished and delighted with the new idea which all this gave me of the resources of human art and industry. I had heard of such things before, but to feel, one ought to see.

I did nothing for three or four days, but to wander up and down the streets looking, gazing, and examining with an almost insatiable curiosity. New York at that

time, was far inferior, to what it must by this time, have become ; and the commercial restrictions which then prevailed must have tended to diminish its business and its bustle. Yet to my rustic inexperience, the city seemed almost interminable ; and the rattling of the drays and carriages over the pavements, and the crowds of people in the streets, far exceeded all my previous notions of the busy confusion of a city.

I had been in New York but two or three days, and was standing one forenoon by a triangular grass-plot, near the centre of the town, gazing at a fine building of white marble, which one of the passers-by told me was the City Hall, when suddenly I felt my arm rudely seized. I looked round, and with horror and dismay, I found myself in the gripe of general Carter,—the man who in South Carolina had called himself my master ; but who, in a country that prided itself in the title of a Free State, ought no longer to have had any claim upon me.

Let no one be deceived by the false and boastful title which the northern states of the American Union have thought fit to assume. With what justice can they pretend to call themselves Free States, after having made a bargain with the slave-holders, by which they have bound themselves to deliver back again, into the hands of their oppressors, every miserable fugitive who takes refuge within their territory ? The good people of the free states have no slaves themselves. Oh no ! Slave-holding they confess, is a horrible enormity. They hold no slaves themselves ; they only act as bum-bailiffs and tip-staves to the slave-holders !

My master,—for so even in the free city of New York I must continue to call him,—had seized me by one arm, and a friend of his held me by the other. He called me by name ; and in the hurry and confusion of this sudden surprise, I forgot for a moment, how impolitic it was for me to appear to know him. A crowd began to collect about us. When they heard that I was seized as a fugitive slave, some of them appeared not a little outraged at the idea that a white man should be subject to such an indignity. They seemed to think that it was only the black whom it was lawful to kidnap in this way. Such indeed is the untiring artfulness of tyranny that it is ever nestling even in the bosoms of the free ; and there is not one prejudice, the offspring as all prejudices are, of ignorance and self-conceit, of which it has not well learned how to avail itself.

Though several of the crowd did not scruple to use very strong expressions, they made no attempt to rescue me ; and I was dragged along towards that very City Hall which I had just been admiring. I was carried before the sitting magistrate ; some questions were put and answered ; some oaths were sworn, and papers written. I had not yet recovered from the first confusion of my seizure ; and this array of courts and constables was a horrid sort of danger to which I was totally unaccustomed, so that I scarcely know what was said or done. But to the best of my recollection the magistrate declined acting on the question ; though he consented to grant a warrant for detaining me in prison, till I could be taken before some other tribunal.

The warrant was made out, and I was delivered over to an officer. The court-room was filled with the crowd, who had followed us from the street. They collected close about us, as we left the court-room ; and I could see by the expression of their faces, and the words which some of them dropped, that they were very well inclined to favor my escape. At first, I seemed all submission to the officer ;—but we had gone but a very few steps, when with a sudden spring I tore myself from his grasp, and darted among the crowd, which opened to give me a passage. I heard noise, confusion and shouts behind me ; but in a moment, I had cleared the enclosure in which the City Hall stood, and crossing one of the streets by which it was bounded, I dashed down a narrow and crooked lane. The people stared at me as I ran, and some shouted stop thief ! One or two seemed half inclined to seize me ; but I turned one short corner and then another, and finding that I was not pursued, I soon dropped into a walk.

For this escape I return my thanks, not to the laws of New York, but to the good will of her citizens. The secret bias and selfish interest of the law-makers, often leads them wrong ; the unprompted and disinterested impulses of the people, are almost always right. It is true that the artful practice and cunning instigation of the purchased friends and bribed advocates of oppression, joined to the interest which the thieves and pick-pockets of a great city always have in civil tumult and confusion, may now and then succeed in exciting the young, the ignorant, the thoughtless, and the depraved to acts of violence in favor of tyranny. But

so congenial to the human heart is the love of freedom, that it burns not brighter in the souls of sages and of heroes, than in the bosoms even of the most ignorant and thoughtless, when not quenched by some excited prejudice, base passion, or sinister influence.

In my previous wanderings about the town, I had discovered the road that led northwardly out of it ; and I soon turned in that direction, determined to shake off from my feet, the very dust of a city, where I had been so near falling back again into the wretched condition of servitude.

I traveled all that day,—and at night, the inn-keeper, at whose house I lodged, told me that I was in the state of Connecticut. I now pursued my flight for several days, through a fine hilly and mountainous country, such as I had never seen before. The nobleness of the prospect, the craggy rocks, and rugged hills, contrasted finely with the excellent cultivation of the valleys, and the universal thrift and industry of the inhabitants. Where freedom nerves the arm, it is in vain that rocks and hills of granite, oppose the labors of the cultivator. Industrious liberty teaches him the art to extract comfort, competence and wealth from a soil the most unwilling and ungrateful.

I knew that Boston was the great sea-port of New England ; and thither I directed my steps, resolved to leave a land however otherwise inviting, whose laws would not acknowledge me a freeman. As I approached the town, the country lost much of its picturesque and hilly grandeur ; but this was made up for by the greater beauty of its smoother and better cultivated

fields ; and by the pretty dwellings scattered so numerous along the road, that the environs of the town seemed a continued village. The city itself, seated on hills, and seen for a considerable distance, gave a noble termination to the prospect.

I crossed a broad river, by a long bridge, and soon entered the town ; but I did not stop to examine it. Liberty was too precious to be sacrificed to the gratification of an idle curiosity ; a New York mob had set me free ; a Boston mob might perhaps delight in the opportunity of restoring me to servitude. I found my way, as soon as the crooked and irregular streets would allow me, to the wharves. Many of the ships were stripped and rotting in the docks ; but after some search and inquiry, I found a vessel about to sail for Bordeaux. I offered myself as a sailor. The captain questioned me, and laughed heartily at my land-lubberly air, and rustic ignorance ; but finally he agreed to take me at half wages. He advanced me a month's pay ; and the second mate who was a fine young fellow, and who seemed to feel for my lonely and helpless ignorance, assisted me in buying such clothes as would be necessary for the voyage.

In a few days, our cargo was completed, and the ship was ready for sea. We dropped off from the wharf ; threaded our course among the numerous islets and headlands of Boston harbor ; passed the castle and the light-house ; sent off our pilot ; and with all sail set, and a smacking breeze, we left the town behind.

As I stood upon the forecastle, and looked towards the land, which soon seemed but a little streak in the

horizon, and was fast sinking from our sight, I seemed to feel a heavy weight drop off me. The chains were gone. I felt myself a freeman ; and as I watched the fast receding shore my bosom heaved with a proud scorn,—a mingled feeling of safety and disdain.

“ Farewell my country ! ”—such were the thoughts that rose upon my mind, and pressed to find an utterance from my lips ;—“ and such a country ! A land boasting to be the chosen seat of liberty and equal rights, yet holding such a portion of her people in hopeless, helpless, miserable bondage ! ”

“ Farewell my country ! Much is the gratitude and thanks I owe thee ! Land of the tyrant and the slave, Farewell ! ”

“ And welcome, welcome, ye bounding billows and foaming surges of the ocean ! Ye are the emblems and the children of liberty—I hail ye as my brothers !—for, at last, I too am free !—free !—free ! ”

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## CHAPTER XV.

THE favorable breezes, with which we had set out, did not last long. The weather soon became tempestuous, and we were involved in fogs, and driven about by contrary winds. Our labors and hardships were very great ; but still I found a sort of pleasure in them. It was for myself that I toiled and suffered ; and that thought gave me strength and vigor.

I applied myself with the greatest zeal and good-will to learn the business of my profession. At first, my companions laughed at my ignorance and awkwardness, and were full of their jokes and tricks upon me. But though rude and thoughtless, they were generous and good natured. In the very first week of our voyage, I had a fair fight with the bully of the ship. I whipped him soundly ; and the crew all agreed, that there was something in me.

I was strong and active ; and as I made it a point to imitate whatever I saw done by any of the crew, I was surprised to find, in how short a time, I was able to run over the rigging and venture upon the yards. The maze of ropes and sea-terms that at first perplexed me, soon grew clear. Before we were across the ocean I could hand, reef, and steer with any man on board ; and the crew swore with one consent, that I was born to be a sailor.

But I was not satisfied with setting sails and handling ropes. I wished to understand the art of navigation.

One of our crew was a young man of good education, who served before the mast, as is common with New Englanders, in expectation of presently commanding a ship himself. He had his books and his instruments ; and as he had already been one or two voyages, he understood pretty well, how to apply them, and used to keep a reckoning of the ship's course. This same young sailor, Tom Turner by name, was a fine, free-hearted fellow as ever lived ; but he was of a slight make, and his strength was not equal to his spirit. I had gained his good-will by standing by him in some of our fore-castle frolics ; and seeing how anxious I was to learn, he undertook to be my instructor. He put his navigator into my hand, and whenever it was my watch below, I was constantly poreing over it. At first, the whole matter seemed mighty mysterious. It was some time before I could see into it. But Tom, who had a fluent tongue, lectured and explained ; and I listened and studied ; and pretty soon, I began to understand it.

All this time, we were beating about in the neighborhood of the banks of Newfoundland, and as we experienced a constant succession of storms and contrary winds, we made but little progress. We lost a couple of top-sails and several of our spars ; and had been out some seventy days in very rough weather.

I took it all kindly though ; I was in no hurry to get ashore. I had chosen the ocean for my country ; and when the winds roared, the rigging rattled, and the timbers creaked, I only wrapped my monkey-jacket a little closer, braced myself against my sea-chest and studied my navigator ;—that is to say, if it happened

to be my watch below ; for when upon deck, I was always ready at the first call, and was the first to spring into the rigging.

At last, the weather moderated, and we made all sail for the coast of France. We had made the land, and were within a few leagues of our harbor, when an armed brig, with the British colors flying, bore down upon us, fired a shot a-head, and sent a boat's crew on board.

In those days, American vessels were quite accustomed to such sort of visitations ; and our captain did not seem to be much alarmed. But no sooner had the boat's officer reached our deck, than laying his hand upon his sword, he told the captain that he was a prisoner.

It seemed that while we were beating about on the Grand Bank, America, at last, had screwed up her courage, and had declared war against England. The armed brig was a British privateer, and we were her prize. At first we were all ordered below ; but presently we were called up again, and offered the choice of enlisting on board the privateer or being carried prisoners into England. Near half our crew were what the sailors call Dutchmen, that is, people from the North Sea, or the coasts of the Baltic. These adventurers readily enlisted. Tom Turner was spokesman for the Americans ; and when called upon to follow this example, he told the lieutenant, in a tone so gruff as to be little better than a growl, that " he would see him damned first."

For myself, I felt no patriotic scruples. I had re-

nounced my country ; if indeed that place can be fitly called one's country, which while it gives him birth, cuts him off, by its wicked and unjust laws, from every thing that makes life worth having. Despite the murmurs and hisses of my companions, I stepped forward and put my name to the shipping paper. Had they known my history, they would not have blamed me.

After cruising for some time, without success, we returned to Liverpool to refit. Our crew was recruited ; and we soon put to sea again. Cruising off the coast of France we took several prizes, but none of very great value. We now made sail for the West Indies ; and, in the neighborhood of the Bermudas, while close hauled to the wind and under easy sail, we discovered a vessel a-head, and gave chase.

The chase slackened sail and waited for us to come up. This made us suppose that it might be a man-of-war ; and as we were more anxious for plunder than for fighting, we put up the helm, and bore away.

The chase now made sail in pursuit ; and as she proved to be much the better sailer, she gained rapidly upon us.

When we saw that there was no chance of escaping, we took in our light canvass, brought the vessel to, ran up the British flag, and cleared for action.

The enemy was an armed and fast sailing schooner—an American privateer, as it proved, about a fair match for the brig, in point of size and armament, but in much finer trim, and most beautifully worked. She ran down upon us ; her crew gave three cheers ; and shooting across our bows, she gave us a broad-side that did

much execution. She tacked and manœuvered till she gained a favorable position, and then poured in her fire with such steadiness, that she seemed all a-blaze. Her guns were well shotted, and well aimed, and did serious damage. Our captain and first lieutenant were soon wounded and disabled. We paid back the enemy as well as we could ; but our men dropped fast ; and our fire began to slacken. The schooner's bow-sprit got fast in our main rigging, and directly we heard the cry for the boarders. We seized our pikes, and prepared to receive them ; but a party of the enemy soon got a footing on board the brig ; wounded the only officer on deck ; and drove our men frightened and confused towards the fore-castle.

I saw our danger ; and the idea of falling again into the hands of the tyrants from whom I had escaped, summoned back my ebbing courage. I seemed to feel a more than human energy springing up within me. I put myself at the head of our yielding and dispirited crew, and fought with all the frantic valor of a mad hero of romance. I struck down two or three of the foremost of the enemy ; and as they quailed and shrunk before me, I cheered and encouraged my companions, and called on them to charge. My example seemed to inspire them. They rallied at once, and rushed forward with new courage. They drove the enemy before them ; tumbled some into the sea ; and pressed the others back into their own vessel.

Nor did our success stop here. We boarded in our turn ; and the decks of the schooner saw as bloody a battle as had been fought on those of the brig. The

fortune of the fight still ran in our favor, and we soon drove the enemy to take refuge on their quarter-deck. We called to them to surrender ;—but their captain waving his bloody sword, sternly refused. He encouraged his men to charge once more ; and rushed furiously upon us. His cutlass clashed against my pike, and flew from his hand. He slipped, and fell upon the deck ; and in a moment, my weapon was at his breast.

He cried for quarter. I thought I knew his face.

“ Your name,” I asked.

“ Osborne !”

“ Jonathan Osborne late commander of the *Two Sallys* ?”

“ The same !”

“ Then die ;—a wretch like you deserves no mercy !” and as I spoke I plunged the weapon to his heart, and felt thrilling to the very elbow-joint, the pleasurable sense of doing justice on a tyrant !

But justice ought never to be sullied by passion,—and if possible, should be unstained with blood. If in my feelings at that moment, there was something noble, there was far too much of savage fury and passionate revenge. Yet from what I then felt, I can well understand the fierce spirit and ferocious energy of the slave, who vindicates his liberty at the sword’s point, and who looks upon the slaughter of his oppressors almost as a debt due to humanity.

The crew no sooner saw their captain slain, than they threw down their arms and cried for quarter. The schooner was ours, and a finer vessel never sailed the seas.

Every officer on board the brig was wounded. All confessed that the capture of the prize was, in a great measure, due to me ; and with the approbation of all the crew, I was put on board as prize-master.

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#### CHAPTER XVI.

WE had a short passage to Liverpool. The schooner was condemned as a prize, and was bought in by the owners of the brig. They fitted her out as a privateer ; and as they had been informed how large a share I had in her capture, they offered me the command of her. I readily accepted it ; and having selected an experienced old sailor for my first lieutenant, I soon collected a crew and set sail.

The cruising ground which I preferred, was the coast of America. Off the harbor of Boston, we were so lucky as to fall in with, and make prize of a homeward bound East-Indiaman, with a very valuable cargo of teas and silks. We put a prize-crew on board and sent her off for Liverpool, where she arrived safely, and produced us a very handsome sum in prize-money. We now stood to the southward ; and for a month or two, we cruised off the capes of Virginia. As we kept well in to the coast, we often made the land ; and I never

saw it without feeling a strong inclination to send a boat's crew ashore, and to kidnap from their beds, such of the nearest planters as I could lay my hands upon. But I did not think it prudent to attempt the carrying into execution, this piece of experimental instruction, of which the Virginians stand so much in need.

My cruising adventures, chases and escapes would fill a volume ;—but they are little to my present purpose. Suffice it to say, that while the war lasted I kept the seas ; and when it ended, most reluctantly I left them. My share in the prizes we had taken, rendered me wealthy,—at least what the moderation of my wishes made me esteem so. But what was to supply the ever varying stimulus and excitement, which till now, had sustained me, and prevented my mind from preying on itself, and poisoning my peace with bitter recollections ? The images of my wife, my child, and of the friend to whom I owed so much, often, on my voyages, flitted mournfully across my mind ; but the cry of ' sail ahead ' would call off my thoughts, and dissipate my incipient melancholy in the bustle of action. But now that I was on shore, homeless, alone, a stranger, with nothing to occupy my mind,—the thoughts of those dear sufferers haunted me continually. The very first thing I did, was to find out a trusty agent whom I might send in search of them. Such an one I found. I gave him all the information which might promote the object of his mission ; I allowed him an unlimited credit on my banker ; and stimulated his zeal by



a handsome advance, and the promise of a still larger reward, if he succeeded in the object of his mission.

He sailed for America by the first opportunity ; and I consoled myself with the hope that his search would be successful. In the mean time, to have some occupation that might keep off anxious doubts and troublesome anxieties, I applied myself to study. When a child, I had a fondness for reading, and an ardent love of knowledge. This love of knowledge, the accursed discipline of servitude had stifled and kept under, but had not totally extinguished. I was astonished to find it still so strong. Having once turned my attention that way, my mind drank in all sorts of information, as the thirsty earth imbibes the rain. I might rather be said to devour books, than to read them. I scarcely gave myself time to sleep. No sooner had I finished one, than I hurried to another with restless inquietude. I read on without selection or discrimination. It was a long time before I learned to compare, to weigh, and to judge. It happened to me as it has happened to mankind in general. In my anxiety to know, I was ready to take every thing on trust ; and I did not stop to distinguish between what was fact, and what was fiction. But while I allowed an abundance of folly and falsehood to be palmed upon me under the sober disguise of truth, I had but little taste for writers professedly imaginative. I could not understand why they wrote, or what they aimed at. I despised the poets ; but voyages, travels, histories and narratives of every sort, I devoured with undistinguishing voracity. Time

and reflection have since enabled me to extract something of truth and philosophy from these chaotic acquisitions.

For a while, my studies had much the same stimulating and exciting effect with my former activity. They raised my spirits, and enabled me to bear up under the discouraging advices which I received from America. But they palled at last ;—and when my agent returned with the disastrous information, that all his searches had been unavailing, I found no support under the bitter grief that overwhelmed me.

From such information as my agent had been able to obtain, it appeared that Mrs Montgomery, Cassy's mistress, had become security to a large amount for that brother of hers, by whose advice and agency she managed her affairs. That brother was a planter ; and among the American planters, the passion for gambling is next to universal,—for it is one of the few excitements by which they are able to relieve the listless and wearisome indolence of their useless lives. Mrs Montgomery's brother was a gambler, and an unsuccessful one. Having ruined himself, he began to prey upon his sister. Besides embezzling all such money of hers as he could lay his hands upon,—and as he had the entire management of her affairs, her income was much at his disposal,—he induced her, under various pretences, to put her name to bonds and notes to a large amount. On these notes and bonds suits were commenced ; but this, her brother who strove to defer the disclosure of his villainies as long as possible, took care

to conceal from her ; and the first thing she knew of the matter, her entire property was seized on execution.

Among her other chattels, my wife and child were sold,—for it is the law and the practice of America to sell women and children to pay the debts of a gambler :

Cassy and her infant had fallen into the hands of a gentleman,—such is the American phrase,—who followed the lucrative and respectable business of a slave-trader. My agent no sooner learned his name, than he set out in pursuit of him. But he found that the man had been dead for a year or two ; and that he had left no papers behind him, from which might be traced the history of his slave-trading expeditions. Not yet discouraged, my agent traveled over the entire route, which he was told the deceased slave-trader had usually followed. He even succeeded in getting some trace of the very gang of slaves which had been purchased at the sale of Mrs Montgomery's property. He tracked them from village to village, till he brought them to Augusta in the state of Georgia,—but here he lost sight of them altogether. This town is or was, one of the great marts of the American slave-trade ; and here in all probability, the slaves were sold ; but to whom, it was impossible to discover.

Thus baffled in his search, my agent had recourse to advertisements in the newspapers, in which the person of my wife was particularly described, mention was made of the name of her late owner, and a very generous reward was offered to any one who would give information where she or her child was to be found.

These advertisements brought him an abundance of communications, but none to the purpose ; and after having spent near two years in the search, he gave it up, at last, as unavailing.

Of Thomas he could learn nothing, except that general Carter had never retaken him. A man of his figure and appearance had been occasionally seen, traversing the woods of that neighborhood, and lurking about the plantations ; and it seemed not unlikely that he was still alive, and the leader of some band of run-aways. Such was the information which my agent brought me.

While he remained in America, however little encouragement his letters gave, still I could hope. But now, the last staff of consolation was plucked from under me. Of what availed it, that I had myself shaken off the chains, which were still hanging, and perhaps with a weight so much the heavier, to the friend of my heart, to the wife of my bosom, to the dear, dear infant, the child of my love ? The curse of tyranny indeed is multifold ;—nay, infinite !—It blasted me across the broad Atlantic ; and when I thought of Cassy and my boy, I shrunk and trembled as if again the irons were upon me, and the bloody lash cracking about my head !—Almighty God ! why hast thou created beings capable of so much misery !

I recovered slowly from the shock, which at first had quite unmanned me. But though I regained some degree of composure, it was in vain that I courted any thing like enjoyment. A worm was gnawing at my heart which would not be appeased. Never was there

a bosom more inclined than mine to the gentle pleasures of domestic life. But I found only torture in the recollection that I was a husband and a father. Oh, had my wife and my dear boy been with me, in what a sweet retirement I could have spent my days, ever finding a new relish for present bliss in the recollection of ills endured and miseries escaped !

The sense of loneliness which oppressed me, and the bitter thoughts and hateful images that were ever crowding on my mind, made my life an irksome burden, and drove me to seek relief in the excitements of travel. I visited every country in Europe, and sought occupation and amusement in examining their scheme of society, and studying their laws and manners. I traversed Turkey and the regions of the East, once the seats of art and opulence, but long since ruined by the heavy hand of tyranny, and the ever renewed extortions of military pillage. I crossed the Persian deserts, and saw in India a new and better civilization slowly rising upon the ruins of the old.

The interest I felt in the oppressed and unfortunate race, with which, upon the mother's side I am connected, carried me again across the ocean. I have climbed the lofty crests of the Andes, and wandered among the flowery forests of Brazil.

Everywhere I have seen the hateful empire of aristocratic usurpation, lording it with a high hand, over the lives, the liberty and the happiness of men. But every where, or almost every where, I have seen the bondsmen beginning to forget the base lore of traditionary subserviency, and already feeling the impulses and lisp-

ing in the language of freedom. I have seen it every where ;—every where, except in my native America.

There are slaves in many other countries ; but no where else is oppression so heartless and unrelenting. No where else, has tyranny ever assumed a shape so fiendish. No where else is it of all the world beside, the open aim of the laws, and the professed purpose of the masters, to blot out the intellects of half the population, and to extinguish at once and forever, both the capacity and the hope of freedom.

In catholic Brazil,—in the Spanish islands, where one might expect to find tyranny aggravated by ignorance and superstition, the slave is still regarded as a man, and as entitled to something of human sympathies. He may kneel at the altar by his master's side ; and he may hear the catholic priest proclaiming boldly from his pulpit, the sacred truth that all men are equal. He may find consolation and support in the hope of one day becoming a freeman. He may purchase his liberty with money ; if barbarously and unreasonably punished he may demand it as his legal right ; he may expect it from the gratitude or the generosity of his master ; or from the conscience-stricken dictates of his priest-attended death-bed. When he becomes a freeman, he has a freeman's rights, and enjoys a real and practical equality, at the mere mention of which, the prating and prejudiced Americans are filled with creeping horror, and passionate indignation.

Slavery, in those countries, by the force of causes now in operation, is fast approaching to its end ; and

let the African slave-trade be once totally abolished, and before the end of half a century, there will not a slave be found in either Spanish or Portuguese America.

It is in the United States alone, that country so apt to claim a monopoly of freedom, that the spirit of tyranny still soars boldly triumphant, and disdains even the most distant thought of limitation. Here alone, of all the world beside, oppression riots unchecked by fear of God or sympathy for man.

To add the last security to despotism, the American slave-holders, while they fiercely refuse to relinquish the least tittle of their whip-wielding authority, have deprived themselves, by special statute, of the power of emancipation, and have thus most artfully and industriously closed up the last loop-hole, through which Hope might look in upon their victims !

And thou my child !—These are the mercies to which thy youth is delivered over ! Perhaps already the spirit of manhood is extinguished within thee ; already perhaps the frost of servitude has nipped thy budding soul, and left it blasted,—worthless. No oh no !—It ought not, must not, cannot, shall not be so ! Child ! thou hast yet a father ;—one who has not forgotten, and who will not forsake thee. Thy need is great—and great shall be his efforts ;—that love is little worth which disappointment tires or danger daunts.

Yes ;—I have resolved it. I will revisit America, and through the length and the breadth of the land, I will search out my child. I will snatch him from the op-

pressor's grasp, or perish in the attempt. Should I be recognized and seized ? It is not in vain that I have read the history of the Romans ;—I know a way to disappoint the tyrants ; the guilt be on their heads ! I cannot be a slave the second time.

FINIS.

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